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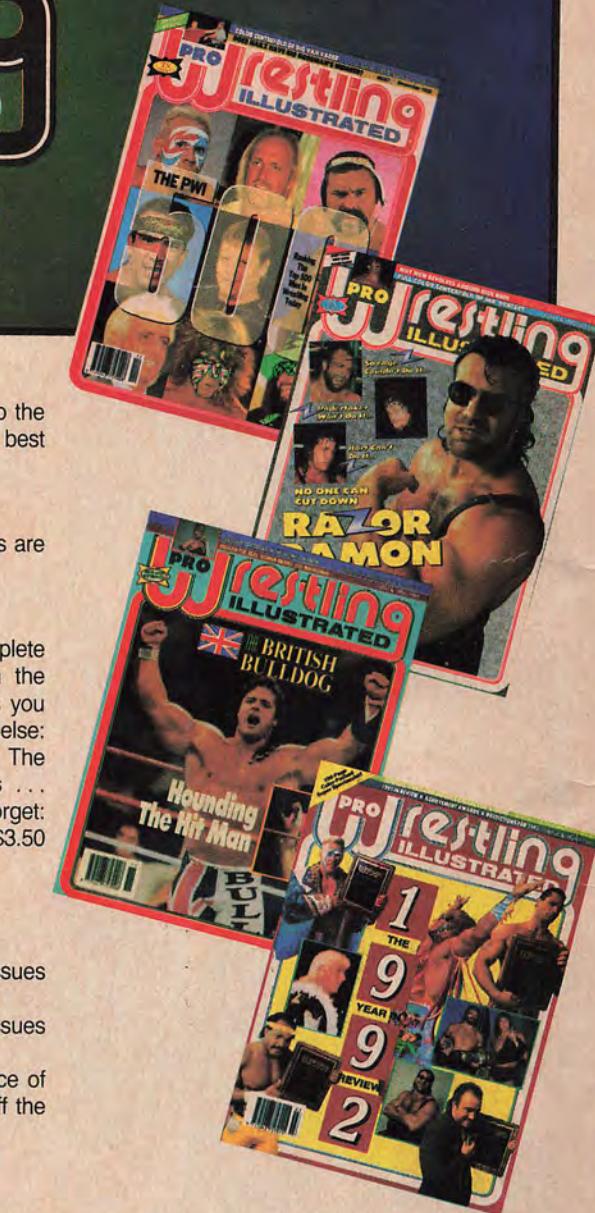
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Wrestling

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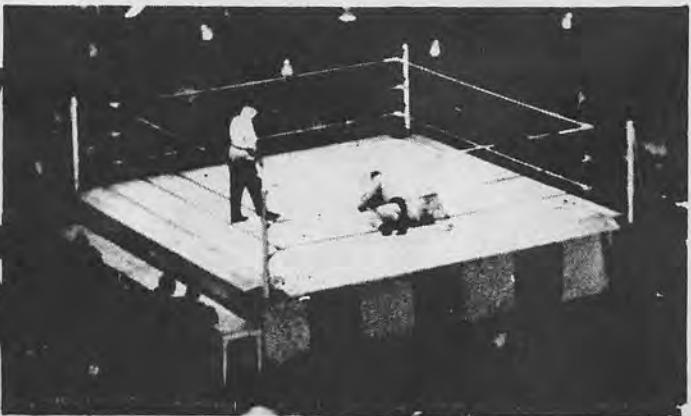
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SEND LETTERS TO:

SINCERELY YOURS

BOX 48

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POLITICS AND PROMOTION

For years, the WWF never acknowledged the existence of other wrestling organizations. When they signed an established star, his accomplishments elsewhere were never mentioned. Late last year, the WWF made an unprecedented move, a talent-sharing accord with the Memphis-based USWA.

WWF stars such as The Bushwhackers, Hacksaw Duggan, and Sgt. Slaughter shuttled to Memphis and appeared on USWA cards. Memphis mainstays Jerry Lawler and Jeff Jarrett appeared at WWF venues.

Recently, a similar agreement appears to have been reached by WCW and Bob Armstrong's newer, but highly acclaimed, Smoky Mountain Wrestling promotion. SMW stars (all former WCW stars) Paul Orndorff, The Rock 'n' Roll Express, and Jim Cornette with The Heavenly Bodies have complemented the thinning WCW talent mix.

While such arrangements between promotions are certainly beneficial to the fans, there is one danger. In 1986, the old UWF and the NWA (WCW) began co-promoting cards. By 1987, the UWF was gone—a victim of assimilation by the larger NWA.

RICHARD EVANS
Gulfport, MS

KID WITH A HART

I am pleased that Bret "Hitman" Hart has been so successful as the WWF champion. The best proof of this success is pinning Intercontinental champion Shawn Michaels. Bret truly



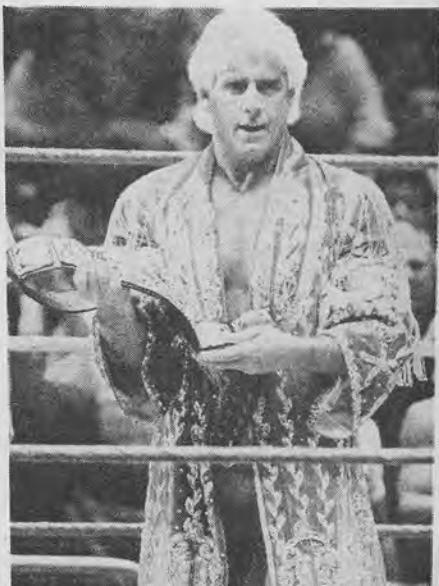
With victories over Intercontinental titleholder Shawn Michaels, WWF World champion Bret Hart has proved his greatness, maintains reader Sean Riley.

is a great champion who wrestles in a class by himself. I'm behind the "Hitman" all the way and always will be!

SEAN KILEY
Ridgefield Park, NJ

WHOOOO!

In my opinion, Ric Flair could have retired just prior to his entry into the WWF and he still would have secured his spot as wrestling's greatest star ever. I find it funny that you guys are still writing about Flair's desperate need for a title ("Seeking World Title Number 10: Ric Flair—Lusting For Redemption," April 1993). Furthermore, the media has constantly tried to write Flair off after each title loss when the "Nature Boy" goes into a minor slump.



Nine-time world champion Ric Flair is without a doubt the savviest wrestler in the sport, according to reader Dave Szymanak.

Because that story was written prior to Curt Hennig's federation exile victory over Flair, I'm sure everyone surely believed Flair's opportunity for a 10th world title was out the window. However, I'm willing to bet anything that Flair will be WCW World champion again by The Great American Bash. As I said earlier, Ric Flair wouldn't have to do another thing in this sport to impress me. I am totally convinced he is the smartest athlete in the game and intelligence is wrestling's most important attribute.

So, when Ric Flair is champion again, don't say I didn't tell ya so! *Whoohoo!*

DAVE SZYMANAK
Binghamton, NY

SCOTTY SAYS

Scotty Flamingo may not be the greatest wrestler in WCW, but he has the best comebacks in the biz. In "One On One" (March 1993), Flamingo said to Johnny B. Badd, "I'm sure there's another federation that would love to have you. On second thought, maybe not. I heard they already hired a clown." Flamingo not only took a shot at Badd, but at the WWF as well. Way to go, Scotty!

J.S.

Metuchen, NJ

UNWELCOME MATT?

After reading "Plain Speaking" (April 1993), I've got to ask a serious question: Isn't it time to phase out boring, antiquated curmudgeon Matt Brock?

If I read one more "the old days were better and they never did that in my day" piece, I'm going to upchuck all over my copy of *Inside Wrestling*. Nothing lasts forever, guys. I've been reading Brock for over a decade, but he hasn't had anything remotely interesting to say in more than five years.

Please consider making a long overdue change.

ROBERT PACKER
Altoona, PA



Johnny B. Badd is dazed by Scotty Flamingo's boxing skills, but in the view of one reader from New Jersey, Flamingo's verbal jousts are just as cutting.

LEX APPEAL

So Hulk Hogan has returned to the WWF. So what. The hottest news ever to hit the wrestling world is the arrival of "Narcissist" Lex Luger in the WWF. With Bobby Heenan guiding the career of Luger, the WWF World title is sure to be around Luger's sculpted waist in no time. Bret Hart? Ha! He'll need a helluva lot more than the "sharpshooter" to stop the former

WCW World champion.

As far as I'm concerned, there's nobody in the WWF right now who can stop Lex Luger. Not Hart, Hogan, The Undertaker, Mr. Perfect, nor Randy Savage will prove to be an adequate challenge to the man once called "The Total Package"

BOBBY RAISMAN

Atlanta

(Continued on page 56)



There is not one man in the WWF right now—including Hulk Hogan—capable of stopping "Narcissist" Lex Luger, says reader Bobby Raisman.

SAKS' NOTEBOOK

By Stu Saks

In celebration of our 200th "Capsule Profile" in the March 1993 edition of Inside Wrestling, I offered a free year's combination subscription to Inside Wrestling and The Wrestler to one fan who was able to provide me with a complete listing of all 200, dating back to 1976.

Frankly, I thought at the time I could have offered a Porsche, because I didn't think there was any chance anybody would be able to do it. Well, as it turns out, it's a good thing I didn't offer the Porsche! We actually had two people come back with the complete listing.

I said when the contest was offered that, in the event of a tie, I would choose one winner randomly from among the correct entries, but since there were only two, I'll be a sport. So, congratulations to Robert Scott of North Stonington, Connecticut, and Mike Robinson of Greensboro, North Carolina. You'll both be receiving not Porsches, but the next best thing: the free subscriptions.

I was particularly impressed by Mike's response. In addition to providing the 200 names, he provided the following "10 Capsule Profile Facts":

- 1) There have been 142 different wrestlers featured.
- 2) Bambi (No. 190) was the first female subject.
- 3) Ken Patera was the first two-time subject.
- 4) Nick Bockwinkel was the first world titleholder featured.
- 5) Capt. Lou Albano is the only manager ever featured.
- 6) Dusty Rhodes became the first three-time subject.
- 7) Roddy Piper became the first four-time subject.
- 8) Rhodes and Piper have been featured four times.
- 9) Eight wrestlers have been featured three times.
- 10) Ten who should have been featured but were not: Bruno Sammartino, Verne Gagne, Pedro Morales, Ray Stevens, Bruiser, Baron Von Raschke, Ron Bass, Jos Leduc, Austin Idol, and Terry Gordy.

If you can answer the following questions, you could be the next

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Actual questions

Which young WCW star is known as "The Natural"?

- 1) Steve Austin
- 2) Scotty the Body
- 3) Dustin Rhodes
- 4) Robert Redford

Who portrayed Thunderlips in the film *Rocky III*?

- 1) Hulk Hogan
- 2) Lou Albano
- 3) Jesse Ventura
- 4) Rick Martel

Which of the following wrestlers is "Ravishing"?

- 1) Ron Ritchie
- 2) Dusty Rhodes
- 3) Rick Steamboat
- 4) Rick Rude

True or False: Jesse Ventura was a member of the elite Navy Seals?

- 1) True
- 2) False

How did you do?

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NAMES MAKIN'

THE RETURN OF **Ric Flair** to WCW has many fans wondering if there will be a reformation of **The Four Horsemen**, the most lethal rulebreaking stable in federation history.

The "Nature Boy," who was the central figure of the Horsemen for its entire existence from 1986 to 1990, hasn't said anything regarding the group. However, **Arn Anderson**, the only other continuous member of the



ARN ANDERSON

quartet, may have revealed future plans in a televised interview.

Speaking with WCW broadcaster **Tony Schiavone**, Anderson complained of a pain in his arm. As he raised his arm, his fingers were giving

the familiar hand signal of the Horsemen.

"I believe in strength in numbers," said Anderson, who was also a member of **The Dangerous Alliance** during its one-year reign of terror. "You can get a lot more accomplished that way."

There are just two other members of the Horsemen currently active in WCW. One is **Sting**, who has no intentions of joining forces with the rulebreakers who ruptured his left patella tendon in 1990.

"Are you crazy?" snapped Sting. "Joining the Horsemen was, without a doubt, the worst mistake of my career. In fact, I'm advising all of the young fan favorites against it."

The other active former member is **Barry Windham**, the current NWA champion. Flair has let it be known that he wants the NWA belt; Windham



BARRY WINDHAM

has let it be known that should the Horsemen reform, it is his turn to be the fair-haired boy.

Another possibility is **Sid Justice**, who is inactive but planning a return to the mat sport. Justice was one of the quartet when it disbanded in 1990, and Flair would love to have the 6'8", 300-pounder on his side. Should the group reform, expect one of its first targets to be **Erik Watts**, in retaliation for his attack on Anderson.

It was a busy week for Anderson. At a Smoky Mountain TV taping on March 1 in Sevierville, Tennessee, he helped intensify the feud between tag team champions **The Heavenly Bodies** and **The Rock 'n' Roll Express**. **Rick Morton** and **Robert Gibson** appeared with a third man under a sheet. When **Stan Lane**, **Tom Prichard**, **Bobby Eaton**, and manager **Jim Cornette** arrived, they began poking fun at him. Cornette kicked him in the shins and pulled the sheet off, revealing Anderson.

Eaton approached Anderson and the two shook hands. Anderson then clobbered Eaton, later explaining that when



JIM CORNETTE

N' NEWS

Bill Apter
reporting...

he was sidelined with his knee injury, Eaton never called him.

Eaton had an up-and-down night, winning the TV belt from **Tim Horner**. Cornette drilled Horner with his tennis racket, allowing Eaton to score the pin. Apparently, one of Eaton's first defenses will be against Prichard, his stablemate.

Jamie Dundee became the first USWA middleweight champion, defeating **Dan Davis** in a one-night tournament on March 1 at the Mid-South Coliseum in Memphis. Dundee got plenty of help from his tag team partner **Wolfie D**, who drilled Davis with a hubcap during the match.



BRIAN CHRISTOPHER

Miss Texas and **Leslie Belanger** also participated in the eight-person tourney, with Miss Texas eliminating Belanger in the first round before losing to Dundee in the semifinals. David defeated Wolfie D and **Master of Terror** to reach the final.

Brash **Brian Christopher** got his comeuppance on the same card, losing the Southern title to **Jeff Jarrett**. Christopher lost when Jarrett reversed

his attempt at an illegal piledriver. Christopher had scored earlier with a piledriver, but referee **Frank Morell** had been knocked down.

Christopher had a tough night. In a six-man match, he buddied up with **The Bruise Brothers**, while Jarrett



JEFF JARRETT

joined forces with USWA champion **Jerry Lawler** and WWF import **Giant Gonzales**, who was wrestling as a fan favorite! Gonzales pinned Christopher for the victory.

Perhaps the most interesting feud in the USWA involves **Eddie** and **Doug Gilbert**. The brothers brawled after a scheduling mix-up and have been settling their differences in the ring. When "Hot Stuff" put Doug in a figure-four leglock, Doug begged him to release it. Eddie released the hold and Doug thanked him by pulling him into a small package for the pinfall.

"That just shows you how few people you can actually trust in this sport," Eddie fumed. "That's the last time I show any sympathy for that bum who claims to be my brother!"

"Superfly" Jimmy Snuka has re-

surfaced as a fan favorite in Championship Wrestling USA, where he is feuding with **Col. DeBeers** and **John Rambo**. Snuka has enlisted the help of **The Tasmanian Devil** and **The Polynesian Prince**, also known as **The Samoan Nightmares**.

A trust fund has been established for the young daughters of **Kerry Von**



KERRY VON ERICH & HOLLY

Erich, who committed suicide on February 18. Donations for **Holly**, 8, and **Lacy**, 6, may be sent to Kerry Memorial Fund, c/o Pierson & Ray, Attorneys, 101 East Randol Mill Road, Suite 105, Arlington, Texas 76011.

The WWF, continuing its recent benevolence, was among seven corporate sponsors who contributed \$196,500 for the Tomorrows Children's Fund. The drive is being conducted by WFAN, an all-sports radio station in New York, and hopes to raise \$1-million for a pediatric wing at the Hackensack (New Jersey) Medical Center for children with cancer.

That's all for now. See you at the matches!

February 1, 1993: Chris Bernucca takes over for Bill Watts and plans to make WCW as popular and as successful as the WWF.

—“On The Road,” April 1993

I CONSIDER MYSELF a pretty good prognosticator. I have picked the Super Bowl winner prior to the start of the season in each of the last two years. I have picked seven of the last 10 NBA Finals participants. And I have picked two of baseball's four eventual division winners in each of the last three seasons.

However, when WCW Executive Vice President Bill Watts was let go on February 2, I was left picking my nose. The italicized paragraph was meant to be humorous at best. I am a sportswriter, not an astrologist.

Besides, I didn't get the job.

Not that I wanted it, mind you. In the last 18 months, four men have held the position and none have performed up to the absurdly high standards expected of them by Turner Broadcasting Systems, which owns WCW. I understand that the vice president's office at One CNN Center has been fitted with a revolving door.

The only place where the nameplates have changed more frequently has been the WCW locker room. While Watts was VP, we saw the arrival of Shane Douglas, 2 Cold Scorpio, and Davey Boy Smith. We saw the departure of Greg Valentine, Terry Taylor, Paul E. Dangerously, and Rick and Scott Steiner. We saw the arrival and departure of Butch Reed, Dick Slater, Jake Roberts, and Steve Williams and Terry Gordy.

Under Watts, WCW sorely lacked continuity, which is important to the success of any company. George Steinbrenner has made more deals than Monty Hall, and as a result, the once-proud New York Yankees haven't won as much as a division title since 1981.

Watts was a steadfast opponent of guaranteed contracts. He preferred to pay his wrestlers on a per-match basis, continually citing the “downfall” of football, baseball, and basketball when those sports began offering their guaranteed contracts to their top-notch talent.

“The NFL tried that years ago and found that it doesn't work,” maintained Watts. Right, Bill, that Super Bowl rating was just an aberration.

What Watts did was attempt to negotiate the same type of deal with the Steiners that he did with Marcus Alexander Bagwell, which is like the Chicago Bulls offering Michael Jordan the same contract as Will Perdue.

The only similarity between the Steiners and Bagwell is that they both wrestle for a living. The Steiners were one of WCW's true drawing cards, while Bagwell may never be a main-eventer. It is one thing to be a tough negotiator; it is another to insult a superstar with a low-ball

offer.

Not every wrestler deserves a guaranteed contract. However, every wrestler deserves optimum working conditions, something Watts seemed to overlook when he removed the mats from the ringside area. “It's going to be tough to survive in WCW,” he explained. “These men had better be in shape.”

Sting appears to be in perhaps the best shape of any WCW wrestler. Had the federation's top meal ticket broken his neck because he landed on concrete instead of padding, I don't think that explanation would have placated the suits at TBS.

Inexplicably, Watts de-emphasized the light heavyweight division, which set WCW apart from every other American-based federation. First, he outlawed maneuvers from the top rope, which neutralized the offensive attacks of many wrestlers and sent the fans into a tizzy. Then he stripped Brad Armstrong of the light heavyweight title while vaguely promising a tournament to determine a new champion that has yet to take place. Basically, Watts took WCW's equivalent of the mole on Cindy Crawford's face and had it surgically removed.



Bill Watts

Tenure as vice president. That, more than anything else, speaks volumes.

Watts' regime was not without some positives. He opened doors with Japan and Smoky Mountain, which saw the infusion of such talent as Masa Chono and The Heavenly Bodies. He did away with the meaningless U.S. tag team title and restored prestige to the NWA title. He got tough on some of the prima donnas who repeatedly arrived late at cards. But he still managed to alienate every single WCW wrestler whose last name wasn't Watts.

I'm not saying that I could have done a better job than Bill Watts. He knows far more than I do about the business of the sport. He had to make WCW as interesting as the WWF without making it the same as the WWF. He was under a lot of pressure to increase profits and that may have influenced many of his decisions.

There is, however, one thing at which I am infinitely better than Bill Watts. How I treat the people who work with me and under me. □

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TOP SECRET

Behind the Dressing Room Door

by David
Rosenbaum

I'M NOT GOING to write a word about Kerry Von Erich.

Not one.

There are too many good things happening in wrestling these days to harp on a recurring tragedy. I'd rather write about the returns of Hulk Hogan and Brutus Beefcake, the near-simultaneous departure and arrival of Bill Watts and Ric Flair in WCW, the Sting-Big Van Vader battle at Super-Brawl III, or 2 Cold Scorpio's magnificent victory over Chris Benoit on that same card.

We can talk about the WWF sharing its talent with the USWA. Kamala's incredible turn from very bad to very good. Or Yokozuna's dominance over his WWF competition.

Why be negative when it's so easy to be positive these days?

Wrestling fans have a lot to be excited about. If the WWF can lend its talent to another federation, why can't WCW or any of the other federations? Besides, President Clinton is always talking about the global economy. How about a global economy for wrestling? How about a free market where everybody is free to move about?

Just a few years ago, we were getting tired of suggesting inter-federation matches, knowing they could never happen. Now, just when it looked bleakest, McMahon (of all people) is sending his talent south. Wonderful!

There is definitely hope here. If boxing's alphabet federations can agree on a champion once in a while, why can't wrestling?

Let's move on.

Doug and Eddie Gilbert are feuding in the USWA. I'm not surprised. Doug has a big mouth.

(Continued on page 60)

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THE

INSIDER

By Eddie Ellner

[The opinions expressed in "The Insider" are those of Eddie Ellner alone, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of anyone else on the staff of this magazine.]

I LEARNED OF Kerry Von Erich's suicide from a friend, a literary agent with no affiliation to the sport. He had heard about it on CNN, and was shocked by the depths of the family's tragic history. He suggested I submit a book proposal.

"It has all the elements of a best-seller," he said. "Sordid death, religion, sex appeal, celebrity—it could be your big break."

I was flattered by his confi-

dence, but begged off. I have had enough of the family Von Erich. Today marks the last time their names will appear in a column of mine. Should David, Mike, Chris, and Kerry return from beyond and capture every major wrestling championship, you will not read about it here. Should Kevin retire and replace Bill Clinton in the Oval Office, no mention of it will be made in this space. Should Fritz Von Erich sprout wings and fly to Jupiter, you will have to learn about it someplace else. I have buried the family for good. May they rest in peace.

As I did after Andre the Giant's death, I expect a nominal amount of ghoulish finger-pointing. After

Mike Von Erich took his life, a few hundred fans wondered how I could "live with myself" after all the nasty things I had written about the Von Erich family. The same thing happened after Chris' death, and after Kerry's motorcycle accident, and after Kevin's chronic head and shoulder injuries, and after Kerry's arrest.

Seems everyone is quick to defend and apologize for these Von Erichs. *Don't blame them—they're special. How dare you treat them like mortal folk. These are Von Erichs!*

No one likes the sound of a fallen idol. Especially these days, when a decent hero is about as

(Continued on page 62)



Eddie Ellner refuses to write another word about the Von Erichs. Our controversial columnist is dumbfounded by what he calls the "simultaneous loyalty and stupidity" of their followers.

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A—ON—ASSIGNMENT

BY LIZ HUNTER

YOU WILL RECALL a recent column where I joked about the negative effect I seemed to have on the careers of several wrestlers. After interviewing them, terrible things happened to Rick Rude (stripped of his U.S. title), Ron Simmons (lost the WCW World championship), and Jerry Lawler (entered the WWF).

Only a brief conversation with Kerry Von Erich yielded a positive result. Kerry won his Texas comeback match against Black Bart a week later, and I jokingly remarked how his victory saved me from developing a reputation as a bad luck charm.

Kerry's suicide was not a product of luck. Kerry was a sick man who, if the truth is told, should never have at-

tempted a comeback in the first place. Our final conversation was laced with inconsistencies that should have alerted me to the obvious problems. But it is a hallmark of the Von Erichs that they are world-class salesmen. Kerry sold me a bill of goods—in this case that he was healthy in mind and body—and I chose to buy it.

Despite their history, I wanted to believe Kerry could return and erase all the doubts that still existed about his mental and physical health.

"I'm feeling as good as ever," the tape of our conversation reveals, "and I'm in no rush to prove anything. I'm taking it one match at a time. All I know is that, deep in my heart, I know I can climb back to the top."

Listening to him speak, in that graceful yet forceful manner he had, I imagined it was the Kerry of 1984, after he lost his NWA title back to Ric Flair and reassuring the assembled journalists that he would be back on top soon. He was so young and beautiful, you couldn't dare disbelieve him.

Though I had serious questions about his comeback, I decided not to express them. It made better copy to use him as my good luck charm. The irony is as instructive as it is overwhelming. Moments in sports where fantasy overruled reality are not infrequent: Magic Johnson capping his MVP performance at last year's All-Star Game with a three-point shot at the buzzer; the great Ted Williams bashing a home run in his final career at-bat are two examples.

But most often it doesn't work that way: Lawrence Taylor snaps his Achilles tendon early into his farewell season; Joe Louis gets pulverized in his middle-age comeback, and on and on.

Kerry Von Erich was fine inside the squared circle. But the trip to the ring had too many landmines for him to avoid. I'm left with the image of the battlefield flagbearer leading his troops into combat. Unarmed, he believes his nation's symbol sewn across a cloth canvas will protect him from bullets and cannonballs. He is shot and killed, but quickly another young man drops his gun to retrieve the flag. And so on.

In the heat of battle, there is no telling what goes through a man's head. It's a tragedy that Kerry, and before him Chris and Mike, couldn't share their load with someone.

(Continued on page 63)



Kerry Von Erich the way most fans would like to remember him, celebrating a championship victory with his father Fritz and brothers Kevin and Mike.

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Do you have a favorite wrestler who has left your area? Are you wondering where he is today? Then this special column is just for you. Each month we will update the whereabouts of four current or former wrestlers



BOBBY DUNCUM SR.

One of the most hated wrestlers from the 1970s through the early-'80s, Duncum retired in 1985 to spend more time with his family. "The road trips really killed me," recalled Duncum, who has lived nearly every-

where but now resides in Austin, Texas. Bobby is now a custom control executive with a top automobile dealership and stays close to the sport, overseeing the career of his son, Bobby Jr.



MADUSA

After helping Rick Rude with various duties while he was U.S. champion and totally humiliating Paul E. Dangerously, the "First Lady Of WCW" left the federation. "Stripping Rick Rude of the belt was the greediest thing I've

ever seen a federation do," Madusa said. "I can't be employed by a company that does something like that." Madusa just returned from a safari in Africa and plans to "do whatever the heck I feel like!"



DANNO O'SHOCKER

A favorite of Canadian fans in the 1940s, O'Shocker held many titles and also became a teacher of wrestling. His most famous student was Wahoo McDaniel. "He trained me for my pro debut when I was just break-

ing in for Jim Crockett Promotions in the Carolinas," Wahoo fondly recalls. "Much of my success I owe to him." Today, Danno is happily retired in a suburb of Toronto, Ontario, with Jean, his wife of 45 years.



THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR

After appearing at some independent cards and fan club conventions, Warrior has been signed by International Creative Management, one of the biggest talent management firms. ICM arranged for Warrior to audition for the starring role in the feature film *Fire Power*, which began production in early-March. Regarding a return to wrestling, Warrior says, "I don't rule that out. Let's see what happens after the movie."

INSIDE WRESTLING

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CAPSULE PROFILE

CRUSH IS A solid contender for both the WWF World and Intercontinental championships ... The charismatic native of Honolulu, Hawaii, stands 6'6" and weighs 315 pounds ("A proud island boy, brother!") ... Made his professional debut in 1986 ... First became famous competing in the Pacific Northwest area ... In 1989, started teaming with The Grappler ... On December 14, 1989, in Salem, Oregon, they captured the Pacific Northwest tag team title from Rex King and Steve Doll ... Lost the belts to King and Doll on January 27, 1990, in Portland, Oregon ... Won the PNW heavyweight title by defeating Larry Oliver in a tournament final on April 21 in Portland ... Scott Norton captured the belt from him on May 12 in Portland ... Soon afterward, left Oregon for the WWF ... Almost immediately, Ax and Smash invited him to join Demolition, which at the time held the WWF World tag team title ("It seemed like the right thing to do") ... WWF President Jack Tunney allowed any combination of the three to defend the belts ... Crush soon replaced Ax as an active member of the trio ... Lost the title to The Hart Foundation at SummerSlam on August 27 in Philadelphia ... Crush returned to the PNW in 1991 and

CRUSH

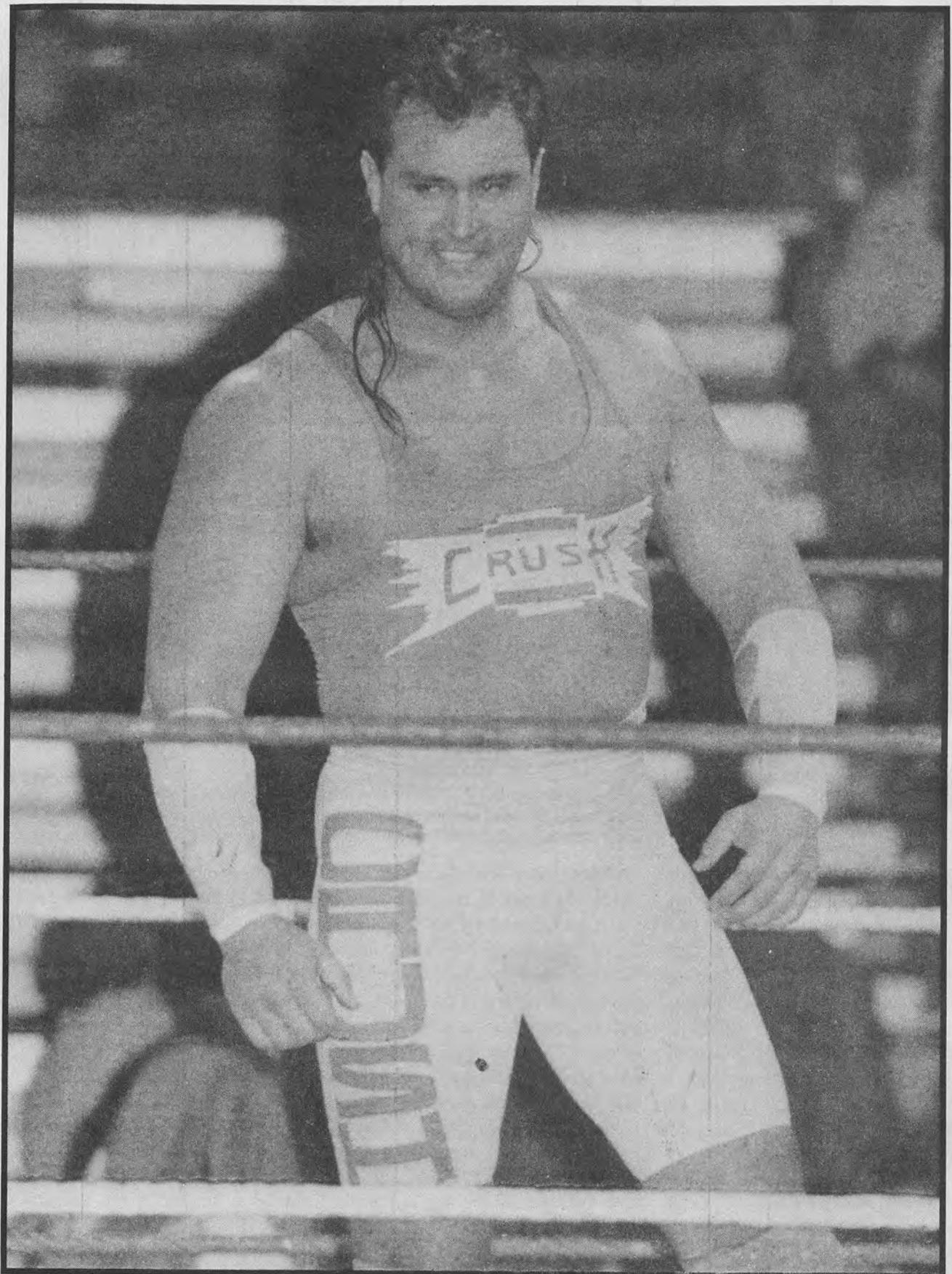


Crush easily presses Terry Taylor overhead en route to a submission victory. The Hawaiian star's main target is Doink the Clown, whose sneak-attack sidelined Crush for weeks.

vowed to drive Rip Oliver and Billy Jack Haynes out of the area ("There was a lot of unsettled business there") ... In July, teamed with Steve Doll to win the PNW tag title from Bruise Brothers Ron and Don Harris ... Shortly after they lost the belts, he defeated Oliver in Portland on October 12 to win the heavyweight championship ... In that match he used his crunching full-nelson to break Oliver's neck ("It's a fact; sometimes you have to be brutal") ... He and Billy Jack took their feud all the way to Philadelphia ... Lost the belt to Ron Harris in Portland in a controversial best two-of-three-falls bout on January 18, 1992 ... After the second fall, Don Harris illegally substituted for his injured

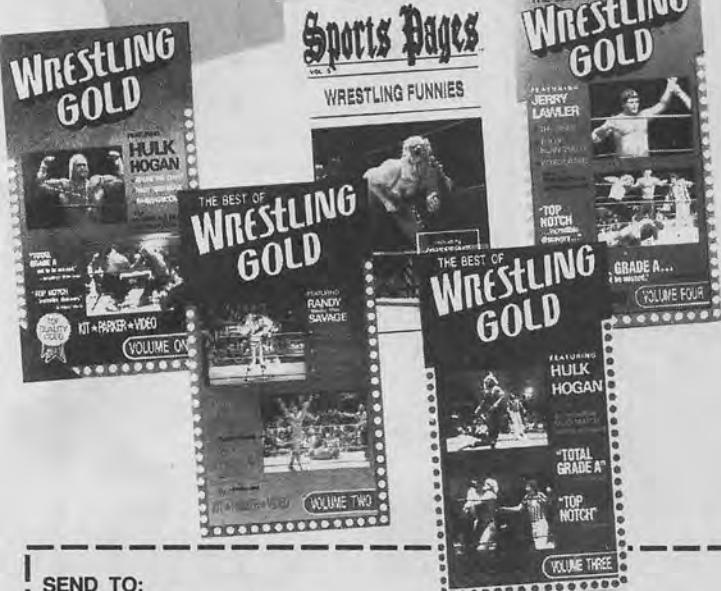
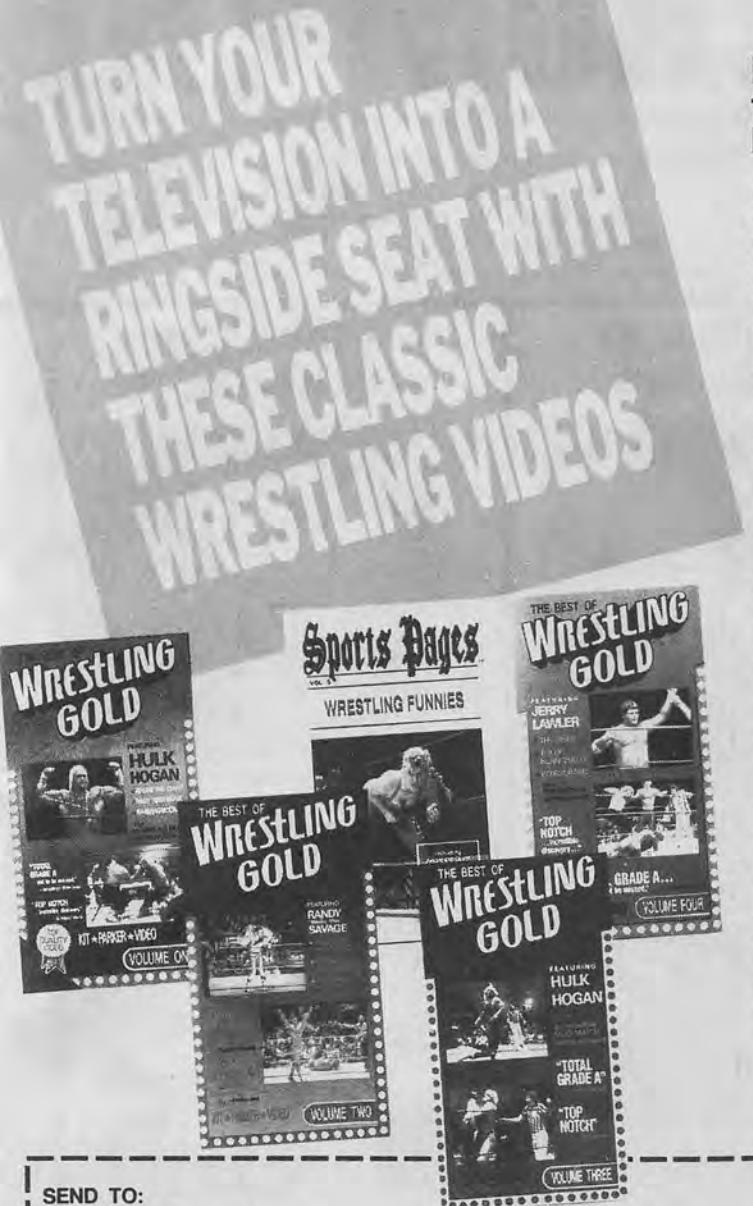
brother and scored the pin ... Returned to the WWF as a fan favorite and a singles competitor ... Introduced his "crush" finisher, a viselike grip on his opponent's head ("The most effective finishing move in the sport") ... Scored impressive wins over Kato, Skinner, and Berzerker ... Began feuding with his old partner Ax, who had since become Repo Man ... Beat Repo at SummerSlam '92 in London ("The Demolition days were a long way away by then") ... Beat Brooklyn Brawler at the Survivor Series ... Currently locked in a feud with Doink the Clown, whose blindside attack put him out of action for weeks ("What happens with that clown definitely will not be funny!").

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MEMPHIS, TN By Mark Mitchell



CRUSH
vs.
PAPA SHANGO



Many in the crowd at The Pyramid were surprised to see Shango back in the WWF, but they weren't surprised to see Crush dominate the encounter. The charismatic Hawaiian was not at all intimidated by the voodoo master. He shook off Shango's most powerful blows and plunged straight ahead. Crush gave the fans a big smile everytime they signaled for him to use his headcrushing finishing move. He finally obliged and used the maneuver to make Shango submit.

OTHER BOUTS: Virgil beat Terry Taylor ... Kamala defeated Kim Chee ... Jerry Lawler beat Jeff Gaylord ... Typhoon defeated Skinner ... Rick & Scott Steiner beat The Beverly Brothers ... The Undertaker beat Yokozuna by disqualification.

LOUISVILLE, KY By Nancy Cross



JEFF JARRETT
vs.
LEX LUGER



In this highly anticipated interfederation matchup, "Narcissist" Luger came to the Louisville Gardens to face one of the USWA's most popular competitors ever. At the outset, it appeared that Luger's sheer power would be just too much for Jarrett to handle. However, with characteristic pluck, Jarrett fought back strongly. Unfortunately, Southern champion Brian Christopher had to stick his nose in the action, causing Luger to lose by disqualification.

OTHER BOUTS: PG-13 defeated Danny Davis & Todd Morton when Wolf pinned Morton ... Eddie Gilbert beat Doug Gilbert by countout ... Ron & Don Harris defeated The Moondogs when Don pinned Spot ... Dutch Mantel beat Southern champion Brian Christopher.

LANDOVER, MD By Ray Ney



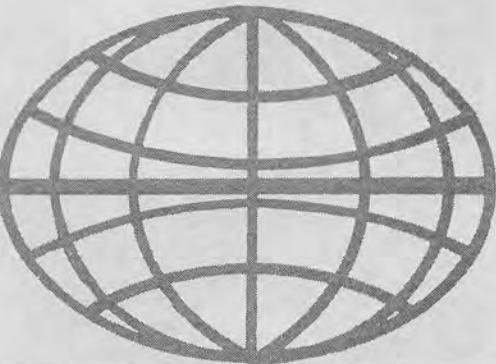
BRET HART
vs.
BAM BAM BIGELOW



The World champion usually could look forward to having a big edge in technical wrestling when he faces a man who dramatically outweighs him, but Bigelow has enough wrestling skill to blunt some of that edge. However, the power moves served Bigelow's purposes more effectively. Bam Bam floored the "Hitman" with crunching shoulderblocks that had many wondering if the belt would change hands. Hart did rally and score the pin.

OTHER BOUTS: Damian Demento pinned Jim Powers ... The Headshrinkers beat High Energy when Fatu pinned Owen Hart ... Tatanka pinned Skinner ... Kamala pinned Kim Chee ... "Mr. Perfect" Curt Hennig pinned Doink the Clown, who was substituting for Razor Ramon.

WRESTLING CAPITALS



JACKSONVILLE, FL

By Luke Mandon



DUSTIN RHODES
vs.
BARRY WINDHAM



Even before winning the U.S. title, Dustin was being pursued by Windham; his old friend and now worst enemy. Fans in Florida know both these men well, as they were big stars in Florida long before they competed in WCW. Back then, though, the stakes aren't as high as they are now, and that showed in the way they tore into each other in this bunkhouse match. Dustin was determined not to lose his title on this night. He did not.

OTHER BOUTS: The Wrecking Crew beat Johnny Gunn & Tom Zenk ... 2 Cold Scorpio pinned Chris Benoit ... Paul Orndorff defeated Cactus Jack ... World champion Big Van Vader beat Sting by disqualification ... World tag team champions Shane Douglas & Rick Steamboat defeated Brian Pillman & Steve Austin.

DALLAS, TX

By Ed Newman



BLACK BART
vs.
CHRIS ADAMS



It isn't usual for Adams to agree to something like a first-blood match, but he has so much animosity toward Bart he agreed to it. Bart was typically all bluster at the start of the match; Adams was more composed. However, the friendly Englishman was not friendly at all in this bout. Bart blunted Adams' charges with crafty countermoves, which might have been enough if this had been a regular match. But Bart started to bleed first, so he lost.

OTHER BOUTS: Calvin Knapp defeated Steven Dane ... Bob Duncum Jr. beat King Kong by disqualification ... Mike Davis pinned Ian Rotten ... Stevie Ray defeated Bull Man Downs ... John Hawk defeated Awesome Kong by disqualification ... Booker T pinned Killer Brooks.

LIVE OAK, FL

By Larry Frank



VAN HAMMER
vs.
VINNIE VEGAS

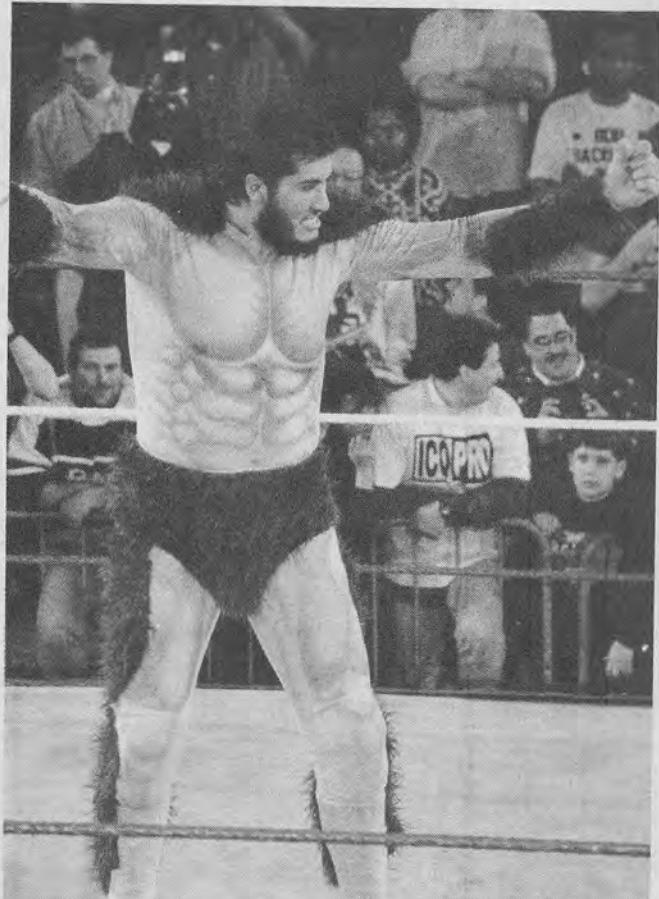


Before the match, somebody at ringside joked that this was a match between two guys who don't wrestle very well. This person made a point, but the action was so intense that nobody cared too much about seeing actual wrestling skills. Vinnie Vegas used his height advantage to maximum effect, but at key points in the contest, Hammer actually overpowered the seven-footer. Hammer went on to win the match and give Vegas a humiliating defeat.

OTHER BOUTS: Erik Watts pinned Tex Slazenger ... Marcus Alexander Bagwell beat Shanghai Pierce ... The Wrecking Crew defeated Tom Zenk & Johnny Gunn ... Cactus Jack beat Paul Orndorff ... U.S. champion Dustin Rhodes defeated Barry Windham.



Matt Brock's PLAIN SPEAKING



GIANT GONZALES

NEW YORK: Very impressed by Giant Gonzales, not because he's such a great wrestler, but because of how much he seems to have improved since we last saw him in WCW as El Gigante. Back then, Gigante looked like a basketball player trying to wrestle. Now he looks like a wrestler. Gonzales is a terror, which is exactly what a 7' man should be. The only thing I don't like is the ridiculous outfit. It's like a flat-chested woman wearing falsies, only Gonzales isn't flat-chested and doesn't need the help of props. The first time I saw him, I couldn't figure out what was going on with his chest. Then, when I figured it out, I couldn't understand why Gonzales wanted to do

that with his chest. Never got to ask him. Actually, I never had the guts to ask him. It seems to me that Gonzales is the type of man who's going to say what he wants when he wants to say it. The WWF has rapidly become the home of some superhuman individuals. If you thought Hulk Hogan was big, take a look at Razor Ramon, The Undertaker, Yokozuna, and now Gonzales. Incredible. What's unfortunate is that with each arrival of each big man, the emphasis on wrestling, *raw* wrestling, is lessened. Lou Thesz, are you hearing me now? I've always felt that skill overcomes size, but there comes a time when the size is just too sizeable. The WWF has reached that point. Before long, we're going to be seeing a top 10 of Yokozuna number one and Giant Gonzales number two. Or maybe I should reverse that. And don't look now, but the "Hulkster" is back.

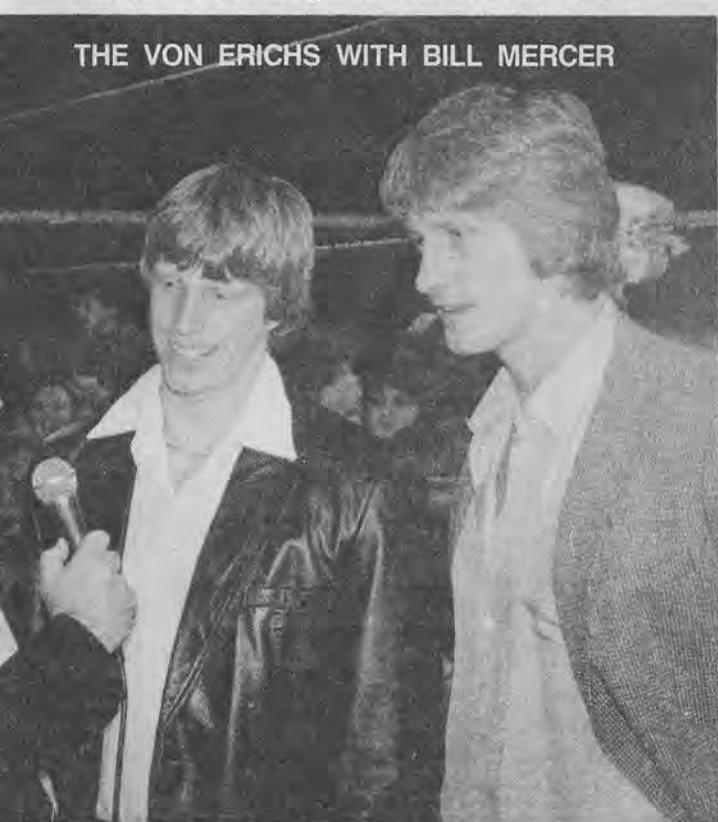


Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

DENTON, TX: Again. At what point do you stop feeling pain and start feeling pity for Doris and Fritz Von Erich? Almost the entire family is gone. The saddest part is that Kerry Von Erich's death by suicide didn't come as a surprise at all. Isn't that a shame, to expect the tragic death of a young man? Here was one of the greatest families in wrestling history and it systematically destroyed itself. Do we now wait for Kevin's turn, as terrible as that might sound? Or do we hope that he learns from his brothers' mistakes and decides to carry on some type of Von Erich legacy? Kerry was the best one, at least in the ring, and there's not much doubt about that. He's the one who won the NWA World title and the WWF Intercontinental title. He's the one who chased Jerry Lawler and the AWA World title around the United States. I can't decide, though, if this is a great loss for wrestling. Kerry self-destructed. Just like the others. Very sad.

MEMPHIS, TN: Something very right is happening here, and it's amazing that Vince McMahon is part of the

THE VON ERICHs WITH BILL MERCER



whole thing. First Curt Hennig, then Doink the Clown, then Lex Luger, now Randy Savage. They've all wrestled in the USWA while under contract to the WWF, and I have a feeling we have Jerry Lawler to thank for all this. He came to the WWF while still in the USWA—and obviously demanding something in his contract—and it looks like he opened the door for this large-scale improvement of the USWA. The thing is, and I'm sure McMahon never thought about this, the talent exchanged has helped both federations. Sure, it's helped the USWA more than it's helped the WWF, but I'll tell you one thing: The people down in Memphis feel a lot better about big-bucks McMahon now than they did before.

ASHEVILLE, NC: Sting battled Big Van Vader for all he was worth at SuperBrawl III and still ended up on the short end. Had to be terribly disappointing for Sting, who lost the World title to Vader last July. Give Sting points for a big effort, but it wasn't big enough. Vader is very hard to defeat, and Sting found out the hard way that he'll have to whip Vader into submission before he beats him. Actually, Sting almost did that. Sting dominated this match, which they called a "White Castle Of Fear" bout—actually a glorified strap match—and Vader left the ring with blood pouring from his left ear. Sting left the ring dejected. The fans did, too. WCW has a very imposing champion on its hands, maybe one of the toughest it has ever had. Who's going to beat Big Van Vader? It's not going to be Sting or Ron Simmons—and it's not going to be Ric Flair, either.

PHILADELPHIA: Good news for mat fans in the City of Brotherly Shove: ECW has reached an agreement with SportsChannel to air its matches. That's good news for everyone, and when you couple that with the fact that Florida's IWF is now seen on many SportsChannel affiliates, it makes SportsChannel one of the country's top networks for mat fans. As for ECW, it's a pretty unique federation. What some of the wrestlers lack in physical skills, they make up for in sheer fight. They say the streets of Philly can get pretty rough. I think the winners of those street fights all became ECW stars. I mean, would you want to meet Johnny Hot Body or Tony Stetson in a dark alley? □

By Andy Rodriguez

BRIAN CHRISTOPHER YELLED at Jeff Gaylord in a high, squeaky voice. The sound was almost comical, but the tone was deadly serious.

"This is the big night, man!" screamed the Southern champion. "Time to get it done! No slacking off! You know I'd be in there with you, but that's impossible. Don't worry 'bout a thing. I'll be there at ringside rootin' you on all the way—and your partner won't let you down!"

"Right, Doink?"

Doink the Clown honked his horn twice.

"See? That means 'yes.' Now get out there and go to it!"

Christopher sent Gaylord to the ring with a hearty pat on the back. He sent Doink down with a friendly kick in the pants.

The Southern champion is a very unusual young man. He rants and raves like a spoiled child when he doesn't get his way. He carries around his title belt in a little red wagon. It's a way of operating that for him is more effective than any hold or maneuver.

However, there is a method to his madness. Christopher is as calculating as he is crazy. He knows what he wants and does everything in his power to get it.

What Christopher wants is simple: He wants it all. All the money, all the power, and all the glory the

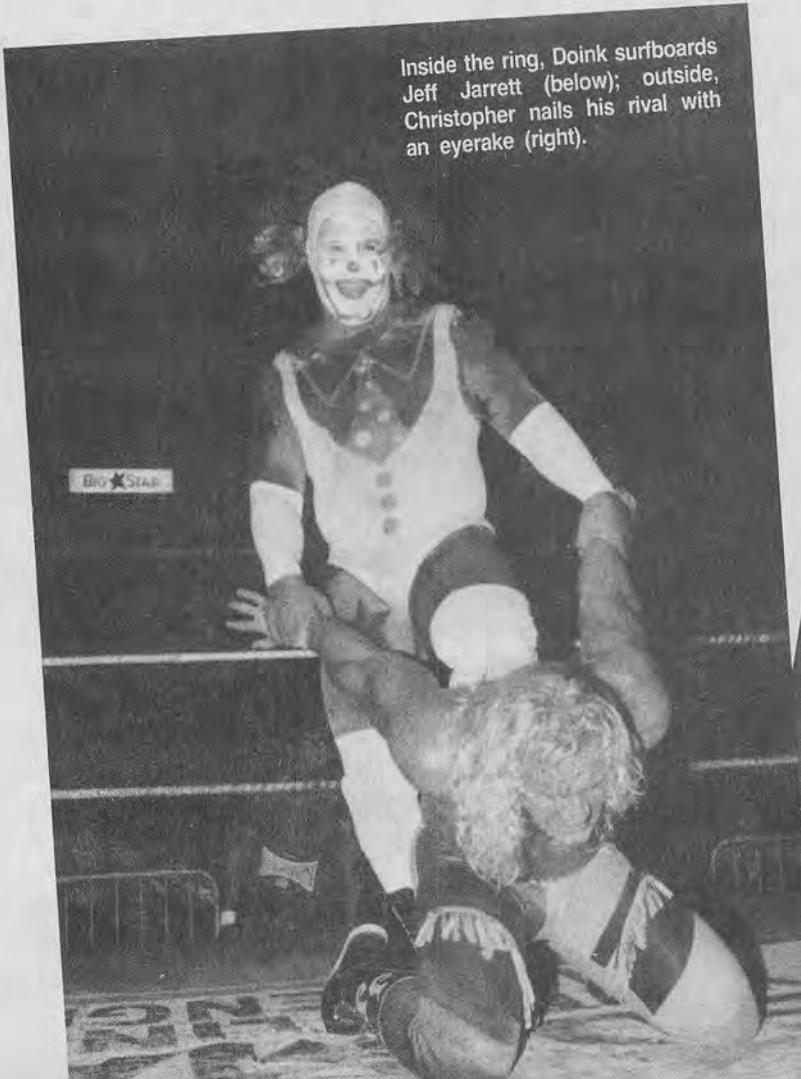
USWA can offer. Most importantly, he is not content to wait. The way to achieve those lofty goals, he believes, is to take down the USWA's finest: Jerry Lawler and Jeff Jarrett.

Christopher was extremely wary of the challenges he faced from those men. Jarrett has battled him many times for the Southern title. Lawler, of course, is the man in the USWA. Beat him and you've beaten the best.

The sly Southern champion has allied with a variety of rulebreakers, including "Mean" Mike Miller and Mike Samples, but none accomplished the task to his satisfaction. He decided he needed a man who thought more like him, talked more like him, and acted

DOINK TEAMS WITH BRIAN

Inside the ring, Doink surboards Jeff Jarrett (below); outside, Christopher nails his rival with an eyerake (right).





Doink (above left) dresses like a clown, while USWA Southern champion Brian Christopher (above right) merely acts like one. However, they're both equally dangerous.

more like him.

So he called Doink.

Doink's debut on USWA television typified the highly unusual style he and Christopher intended to introduce into their battle with Jarrett and Lawler. First, after Lawler slipped on banana peels that Doink had laid on the floor, he was attacked by Doink and Christopher, who needed to be saved by Jarrett.

Next, Christopher decided to assist his manager, Bert Prentice. Miss Texas, Prentice's enemy, was being interviewed when Christopher started pushing her around. Doink's contribution was to throw a pie in her face.

Later, as Christopher challenged

CHRISTOPHER:

SEND IN THE CLOWNS!

USWA Southern champion Brian Christopher didn't think he had the right people to help him fight Jerry Lawler and Jeff Jarrett. So he called in somebody more in tune with his personality, a man to whom he can really relate. He called in the WWF's macabre court jester, Doink. But which one is the bigger clown?

Photos by Scott George

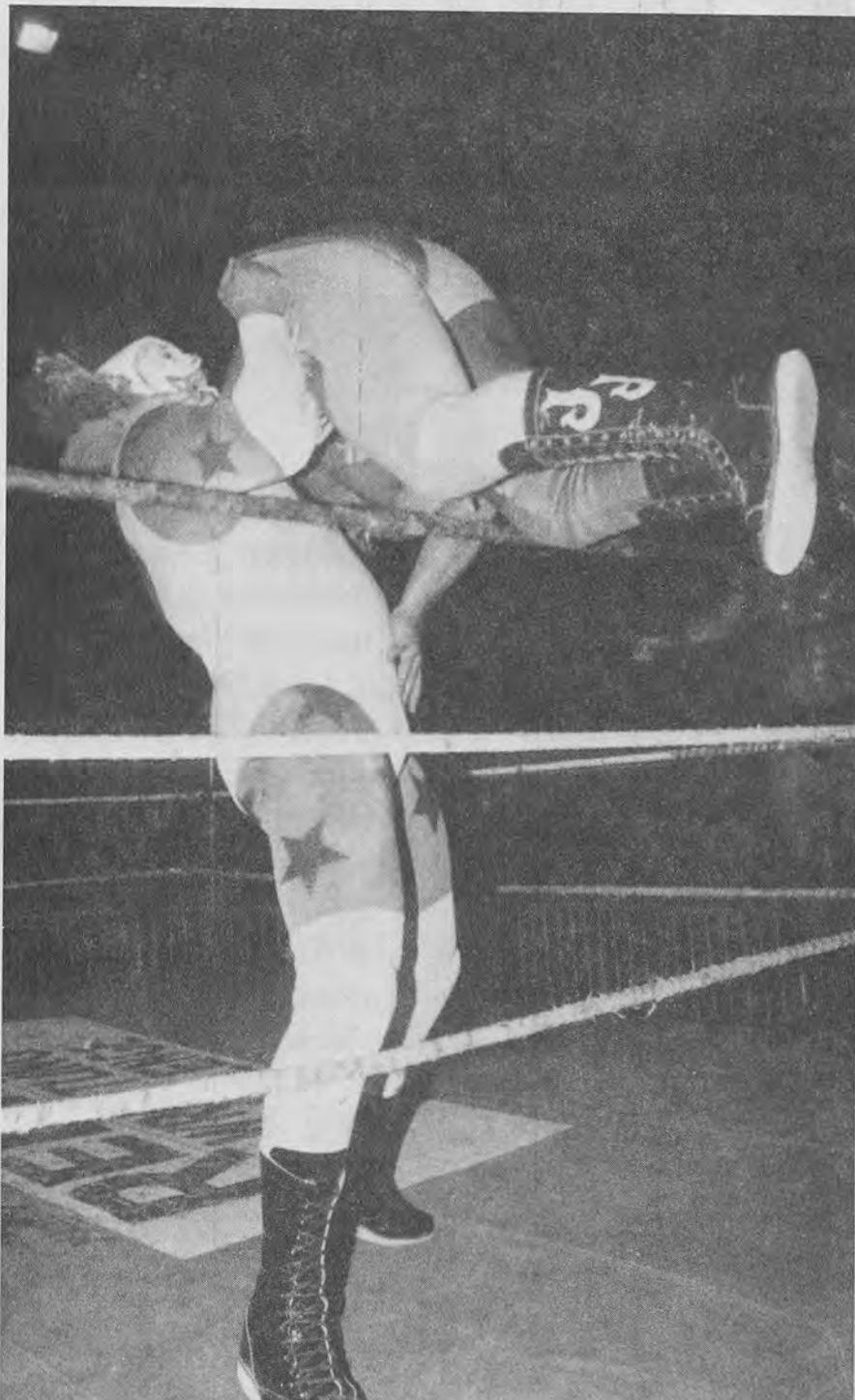
Jarrett, Doink poured cooking oil on the floor. When Jarrett chased Brian, he slipped and was pounced on by Christopher and Doink. This time, it was Lawler's turn to save his friend from the double-team.

This was all supposed to be Christopher's twisted way of softening up Lawler and Jarrett for tag team contests against him and Doink in Nashville and Memphis. Then, hours before the Nashville

contest, Christopher announced that he had injured his knee and would therefore be unable to compete. USWA matchmakers allowed him to name Gaylord as a replacement. They also allowed him to be at ringside for the bouts.

Depending on one's point of view, the sudden turn of events was either a surprise, or a calculated maneuver.

"Listen, I know how much Brian wants to get his hands on Lawler



After suplexing Jarrett into the ring (left), Doink seems oblivious to the punishment Christopher is administering to Jarrett on the ring apron (above).

and Jarrett," Prentice said. "But he hurt his knee and he couldn't make it. If there was any way Brian could wrestle, he would."

"Injured? Not hardly," speculated Moondogs' manager Richard Lee. "The boy looks pretty healthy to me. Seems to me he's just plain chickening out. Typical Brian Christopher. A bit of trouble comes up and he hires Gaylord to do his dirty work for him. The shame of it is, the boy can actually wrestle, but he lets his cowardly side get the best of him."

The subsequent bouts appeared to bolster Lee's opinion that Christopher had faked his injury, a charge hotly denied by the Southern champion. Christopher con-



Jarrett worked over Doink's leg thoroughly and went on to pin him. Christopher resolved that, despite the loss, Doink would return to the USWA with even more of his sadistic surprises.

stantly interjected himself into the action. Ultimately, though, his interference served only to strengthen Lawler and Jarrett's resolve. Doink and Gaylord lost both matches when Jarrett pinned Doink.

"Tonight," said Lawler after the Memphis bout, "Christopher proved what I already suspected, that his original plan all along was to interfere from ringside without getting his hands too dirty. Of course, it failed, because the kid

doesn't have a clue!"

"And, again," Lawler added, "we saw what an absolute joke Doink is. You know, he and Christopher are perfect together. Just two clowns looking for a circus. Well, boys, it's time to fold up the tent. Time for Doink to hightail it back to the WWF. As for Christopher, we'll take care of him right here."

Christopher insisted that if he had wrestled, the results would have been different. He also prom-

ised that he and Doink had just begun their trickery.

"I'm telling the whole USWA right now," he yelled, "when you least expect Doink, expect him! Better yet, forget he's here. Man, I just can't wait to see the looks on Jarrett and Lawler's faces the next time Doink's in town. They're gonna get theirs! Boy, are they gonna get theirs!"

Doink and Christopher: What else to call them but . . .

The Clowns From Hell! □

THE FANS DEMAND: BRING BACK THE WCW LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE—NOW!

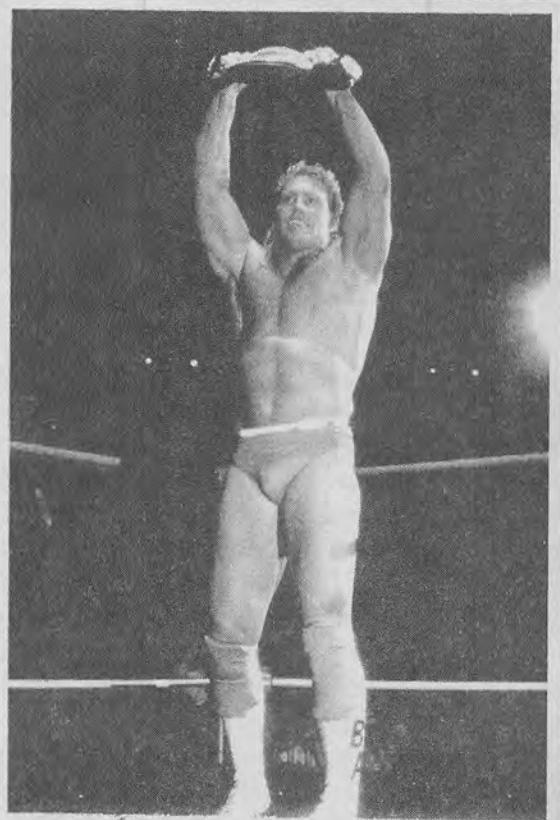
There are still plenty of light heavyweights in WCW, and when they get together in the ring, they usually have memorable matches. But their battles are all for naught until the powers-that-be at WCW give them something to fight for!

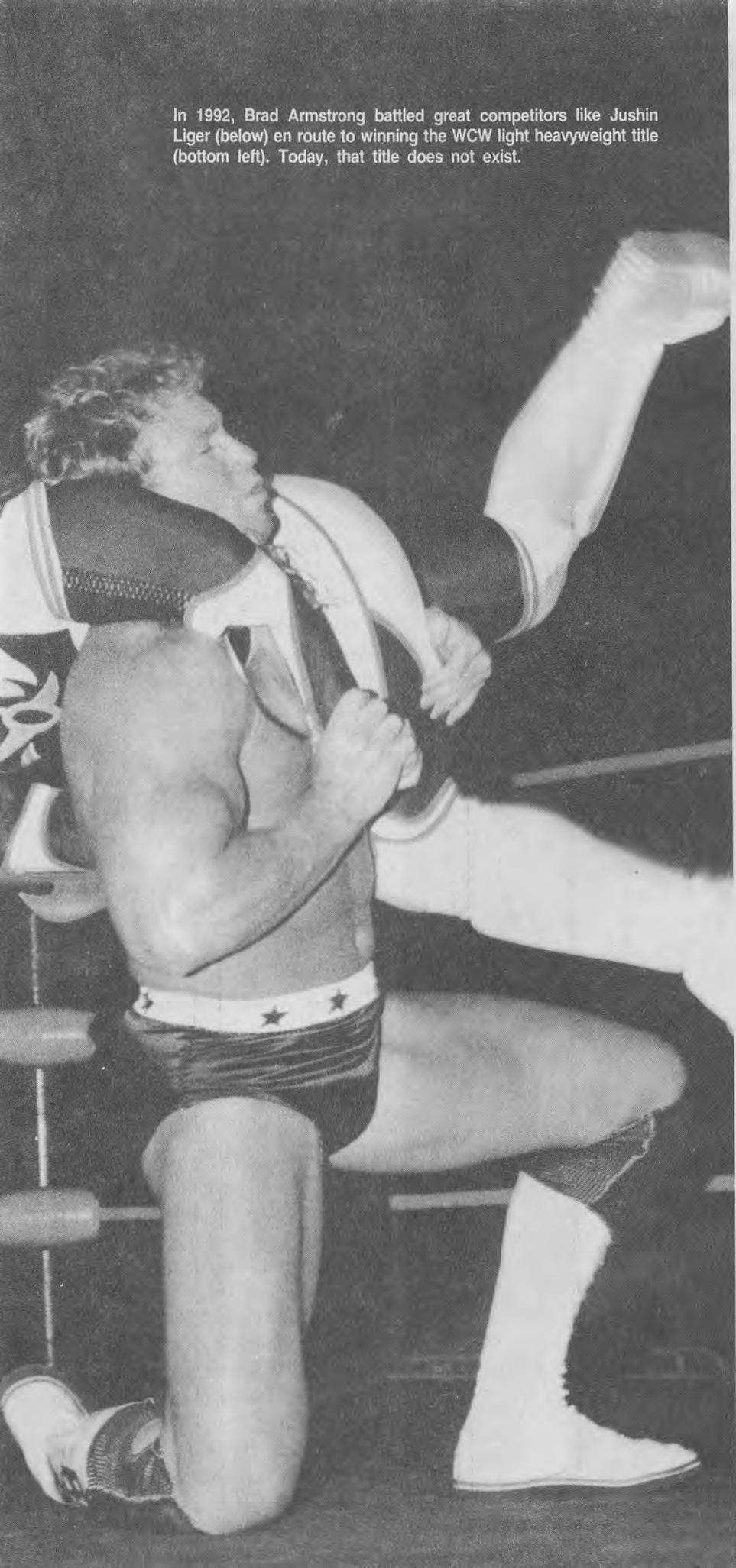
By Chris Bernucca

THE SHORTEST MEMORIES known to man may belong to wrestling fans. Time and again, the faithful of the mat sport either fail or choose not to remember pertinent events that shape the individuals and history of wrestling.

A perfect example came last summer in the WWF, when The Undertaker came to the aid of The Ultimate Warrior at a match in London, Ontario. Fans were so overjoyed that the two men had joined forces to repel rulebreakers that they overlooked the small fact that Undertaker had once locked Ultimate Warrior inside an airtight coffin, leaving him to die.

Just weeks later, another "unremembered" incident





In 1992, Brad Armstrong battled great competitors like Jushin Liger (below) en route to winning the WCW light heavyweight title (bottom left). Today, that title does not exist.

occurred in WCW. Executive Vice President Bill Watts stripped the injured Brad Armstrong of the light heavyweight title, teasing the fans with the promise of a tournament to determine a new champion.

As summer became fall, Watts was pressed for a tentative timetable for the tournament. The light heavyweight division was perhaps the most exciting in the entire sport; it set apart WCW from the WWF and nearly every other federation. Fans and media alike craved the high-flying action and wanted to know when it would return.

Watts spit out something or other about the tournament taking place in early-1993. At press time, 1993 was two months old and the tournament had not taken place.

Strangely, this did not become another forgotten incident. To their credit, the fans have complained long and loud about the mysterious disappearing light heavyweight division.

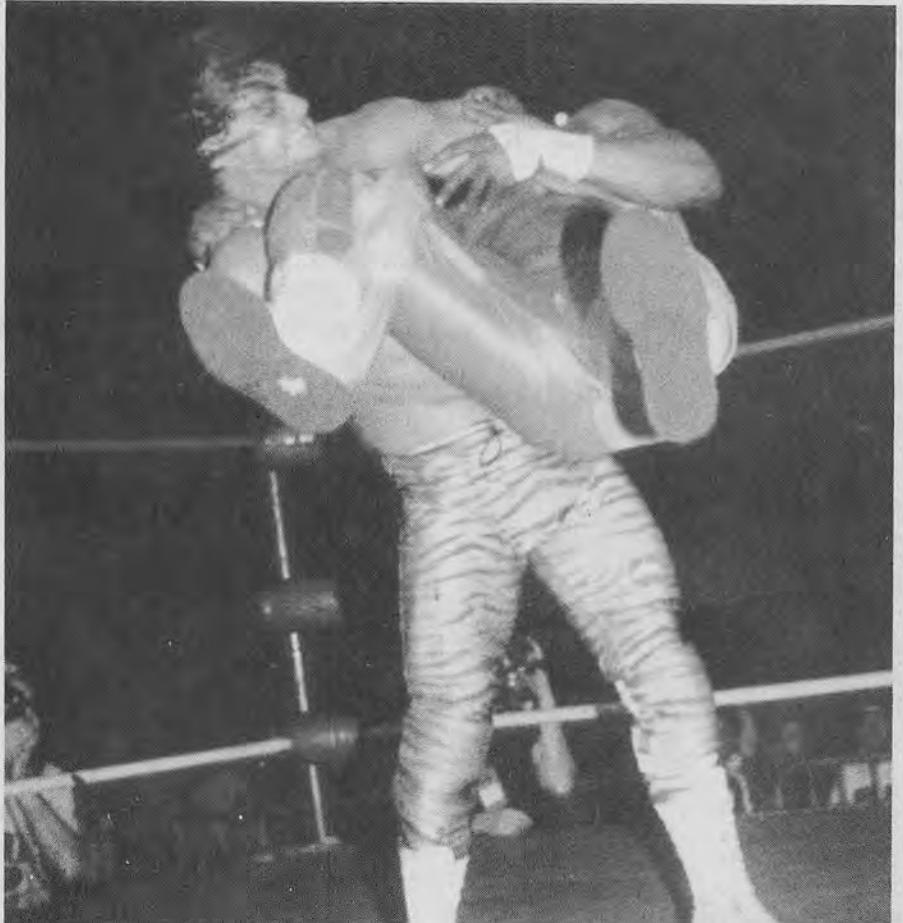
"Why would a federation with this much light heavyweight talent not have a light heavyweight division?" wondered Huey Reynolds, 17, of Gainesville, Georgia. "Sometimes I think the light heavyweights are better than the heavyweights."

Reynolds may be exaggerating, but he is right about the talent base. WCW wrestlers who are under, at, or near the 235-pound light heavyweight limit are former champions Armstrong, Brian Pillman, Jushin Liger, and Scotty Flamingo; veterans Tom Zenk and Shane Douglas; youngsters Johnny B. Badd and Marcus Alexander Bagwell; and newcomers 2 Cold Scorpio, Chris Benoit, Joey Maggs, and Robby V.

"There's definitely enough light heavyweights to have a tournament," said Dolores Hatcher, 43, of Baltimore. "If I were Brad Armstrong, I'd be pretty mad about going six months without getting a chance to regain the title. What is WCW waiting for?"



Imagine the added excitement if Tom Zenk and Scotty Flamingo (above)—or Chris Benoit and 2 Cold Scorpio (below)—battled for the light heavyweight championship.



Part of the reason that the fans have not forgotten about the promise of a light heavyweight tournament is because WCW unintentionally reminds them of it by sanctioning matches between two of these talented athletes. Scorpio and Benoit have been locked in a series of close matches. At SuperBrawl III in Asheville, North Carolina, Scorpio pinned Benoit with just one second left in the 20-minute time limit.

"That was a fantastic match," Ron Edwinston, 22, said afterward. "It might be the match of the year, so far. But think about how intense it would have been if that was the light heavyweight tournament final."

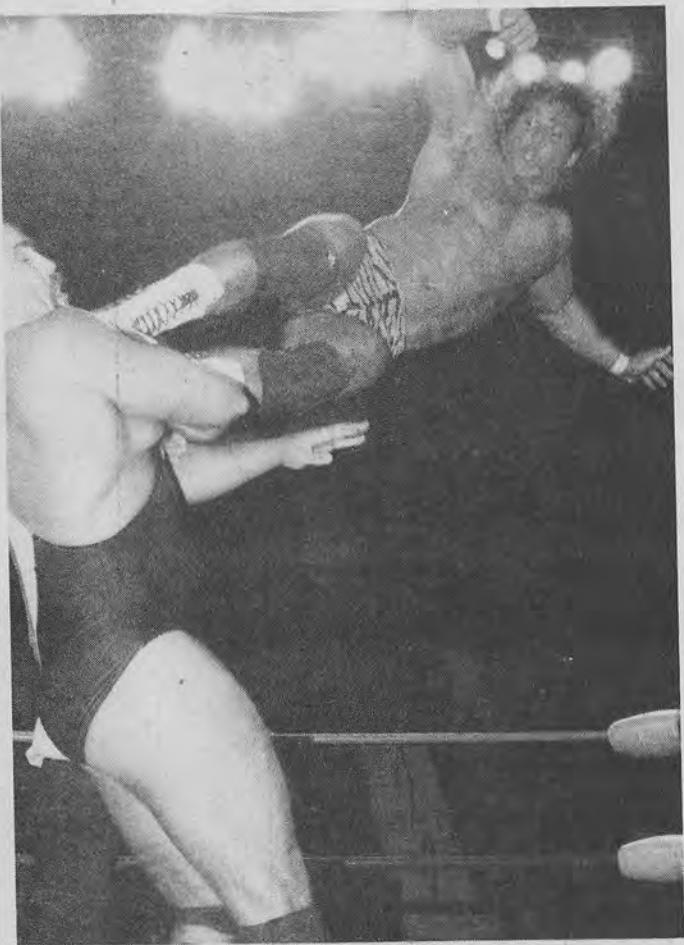
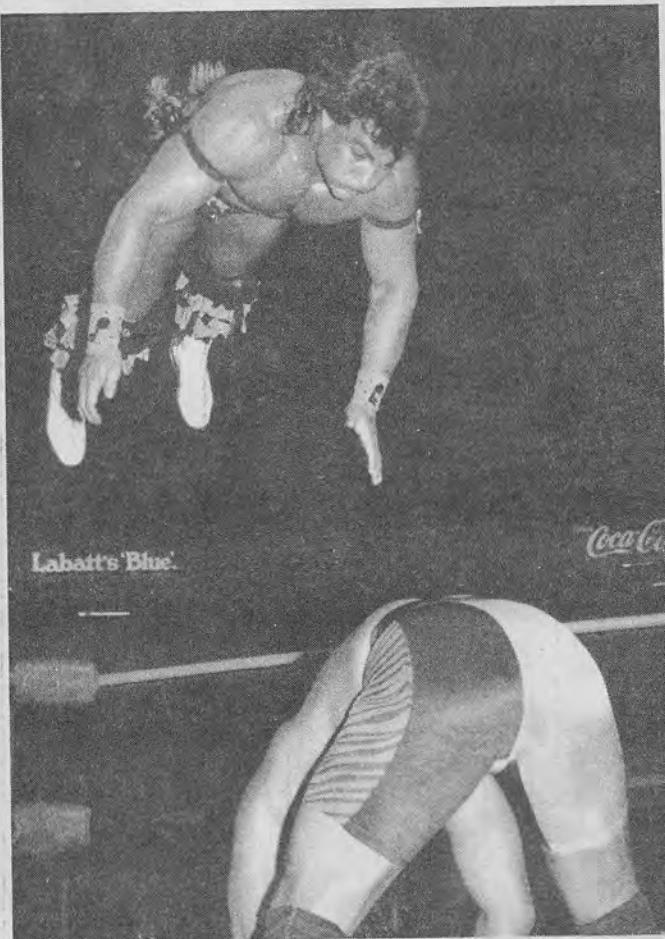
Besides the feud between Scorpio and Benoit, Flamingo and Bagwell have recently done battle, as have Liger and Badd. Pillman and Douglas have tangled within the framework of their tag team feud, spurring interest in a possible singles confrontation.

All of these matches serve as constant reminders to the fans and the wrestlers that, although the talent is there, the light heavyweight division isn't.

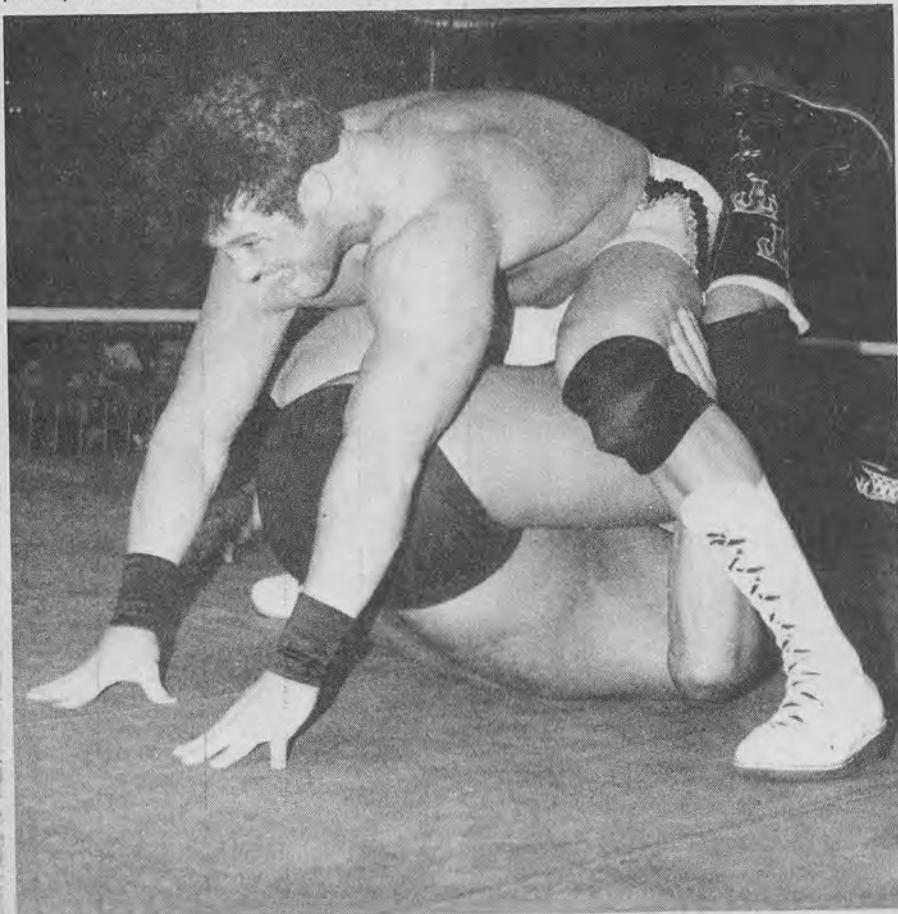
"Yeah, I'm waiting," said Pillman. "I've been waiting since August. In fact, part of the reason I teamed up with Steve [Austin] is because I got sick of waiting. If they have a tournament, I'll be the first one to sign up."

In December, the TV title was declared vacant when champion Scott Steiner jumped to the WWF. It took federation officials 45 days to put together a 16-man field to determine a new champion.

So why has the "Vacancy" sign below the light heavyweight title been flashing for over six months? Perhaps WCW matchmakers are under the misconception that the fans are not interested in the light heavyweight division. An impromptu exit poll following SuperBrawl III shows that not to be the case. Of



Johnny B. Badd (above left), Brian Pillman (above right), and Marcus Alexander Bagwell (below) all have the talent to make a light heavyweight division work. So what's the delay?



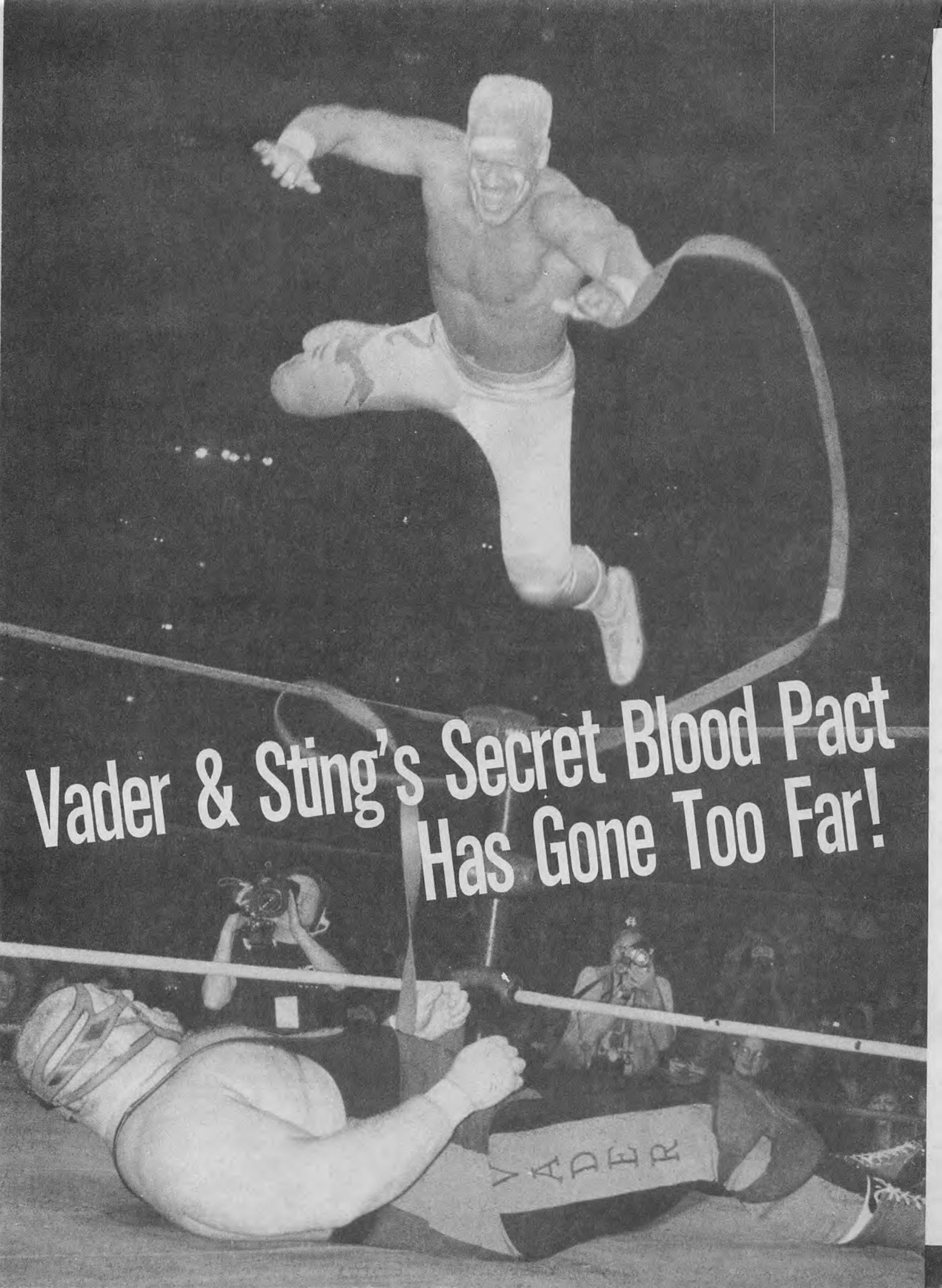
50 or so fans asked if they missed the light heavyweights, nearly 40 said that they did.

"Of course I miss it," said Kendra Robbins, 19, of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. "I want to see 2 Cold Scorpio wrestle Brian Pillman or Jushin Liger. 2 Cold is the best, and he should get a chance to prove it!"

Under Watts, WCW had been a federation that catered to its fans. When Watts instituted the top-rope disqualification rule, fans protested, and he rescinded the rule. When injuries prevented Sting from wrestling Big Van Vader, Watts still gave the fans a title match. And he brought the TV title back into prominence.

However, with Watts gone, it's time again for WCW to turn a harkening ear toward the fans. What they are saying is simple.

"What's the holdup?" asked Jodi Johnson, 32, of Atlanta. "Bring back the light heavyweight title now!" □



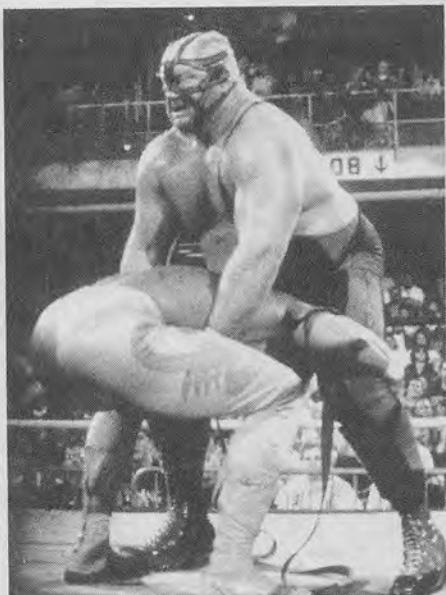
Vader & Sting's Secret Blood Pact
Has Gone Too Far!

THE 100 MATCH WAR!

Sting and Big Van Vader are in the midst of an incredibly brutal war that threatens to break them both, but neither of them can stop, because they both agreed in writing not to. They refuse to cease until they have battled a hundred times!



The strap doesn't prevent Sting from going airborne (opposite page). Big Van Vader prefers punches (above) and piledrivers (right).



By Andy Rodriguez

THREE WERE ONLY two people in the room.

The scene resembled an interrogation; one light shone above a wooden table with two wooden chairs. On the table were a typewritten sheet of paper and two pens.

Barely acknowledging each other's presence, the participants very quietly sat down. One man signed the document. He slid it over to his counter-

part. The other man signed. They both silently rose from their seats and left the room.

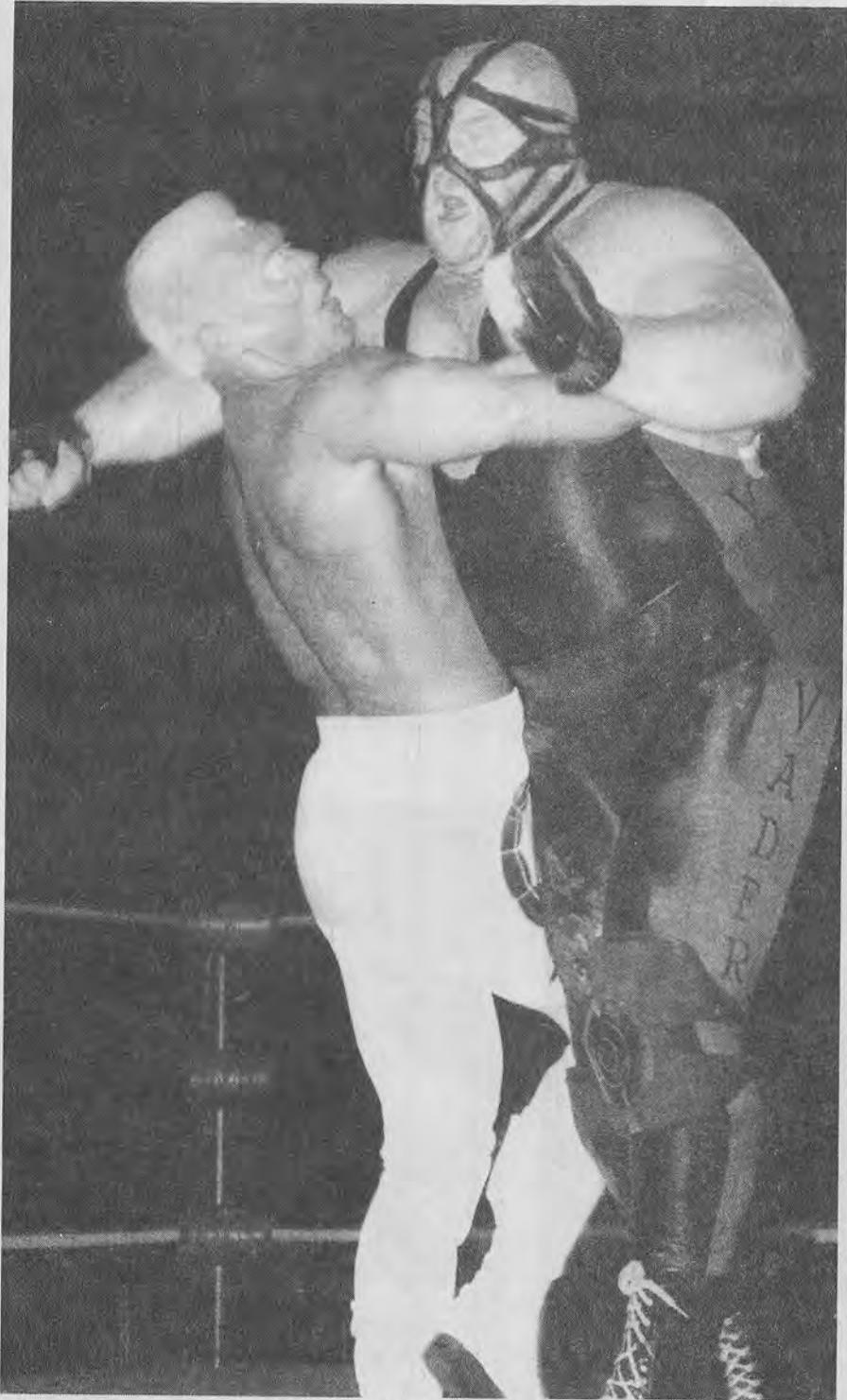
The signatures belonged to Sting and Big Van Vader. The paper was a pact that would change both their lives forever.

We don't know where the pact was signed. We don't know when it was signed. We only know that it was signed, thanks to a rare moment of

candor from Vader's manager, Harley Race.

On that day, Sting and Vader agreed to wrestle each other 100 times. At the conclusion of match 100, they would examine the record, determine a winner, and end the feud. That simple.

Exactly why they signed the pact is even more difficult to determine than time or location. The two men despise each other, true, but opponents who



If the matches between Sting and Vader get any more intense, they may never come close to reaching match 100. Neither man, though, is willing to back off.

have hated each other even more never went to the extreme of signing a formal agreement prescribing a certain amount of matches.

"Let me say only this," Race stated. "There are things no one but Vader and Sting know about. Things even I don't understand. Leave it at that."

Friends and colleagues of both men question the wisdom of such a pact,

even though they may not be familiar with all the particulars. After their brutal, non-sanctioned strap match at SuperBrawl III, they are wondering: Can Sting and Vader even make it to 100?

Should they even try?

"That was an absolute bloodbath," said Steve Austin, who wrestled an early bout at SuperBrawl and watched the

Sting-Vader match on a backstage monitor. "I've never seen two guys go at it like that. It was like they were wrestling their last match."

"A hundred matches?" Austin said when asked about the pact. "No, I never heard anything like that. But unless they're close to that, they should consider quitting. It's hard to tell guys like that to quit, but . . . I mean, they want to continue their careers, don't they?"

The match indeed was the debacle Austin described. Sting whipped Vader with the strap so hard that he raised bloody welts on Vader's back. Vader bloodied the "Stinger" with thunderous blows to the face. In the heat of the action, Vader cut his right ear and it bled profusely for the rest of the contest. The wound later required stitches.

That was in addition to the usual strap match mayhem, augmented by the skills of these two supremely talented wrestlers. Wahoo McDaniel, acknowledged as one of the greatest strap match wrestlers ever, watched the encounter on pay-per-view and said he was extremely impressed.

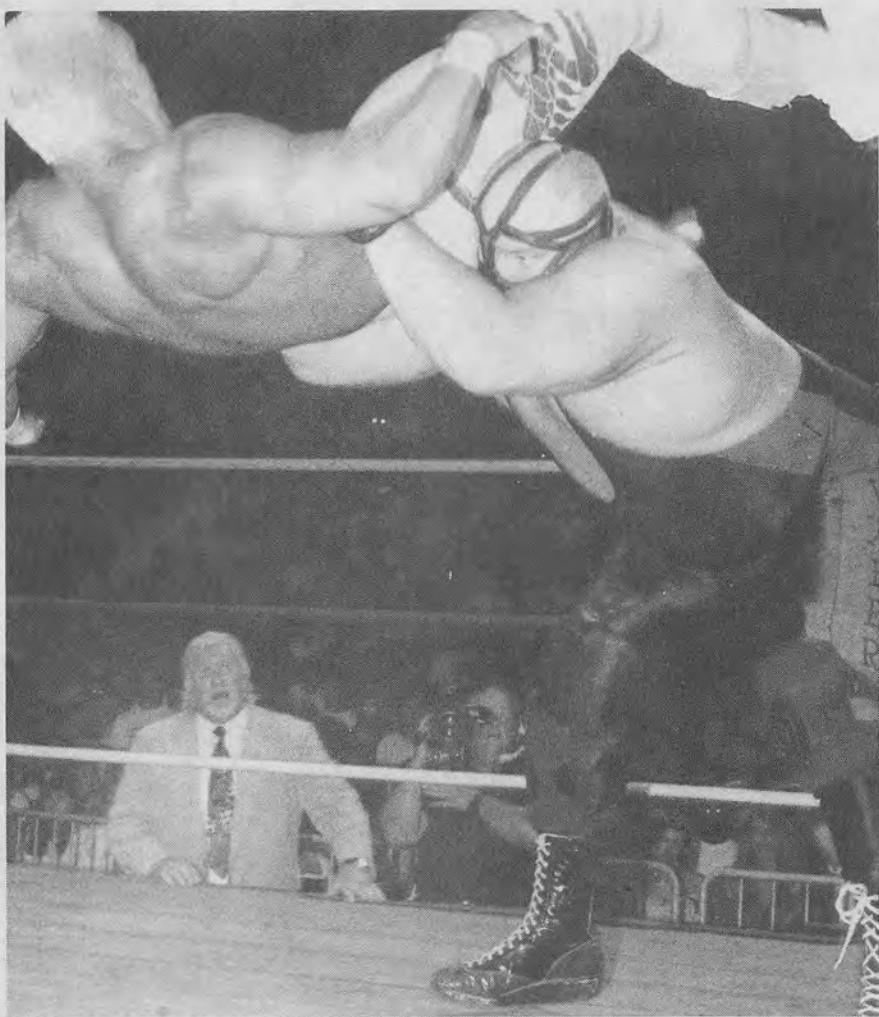
"It was hard for even me to watch, it was so brutal," McDaniel said. "But they weren't just floundering around out there. They both knew what to do with that strap, which makes it even more dangerous."

Danger has been a constant in Sting-Vader battles for the past year. Last April, Sting suffered cracked ribs and a bruised spleen while wrestling Vader at Atlanta's Omni. Three months later to the day, Vader brutalized the "Stinger" to win the WCW World title.

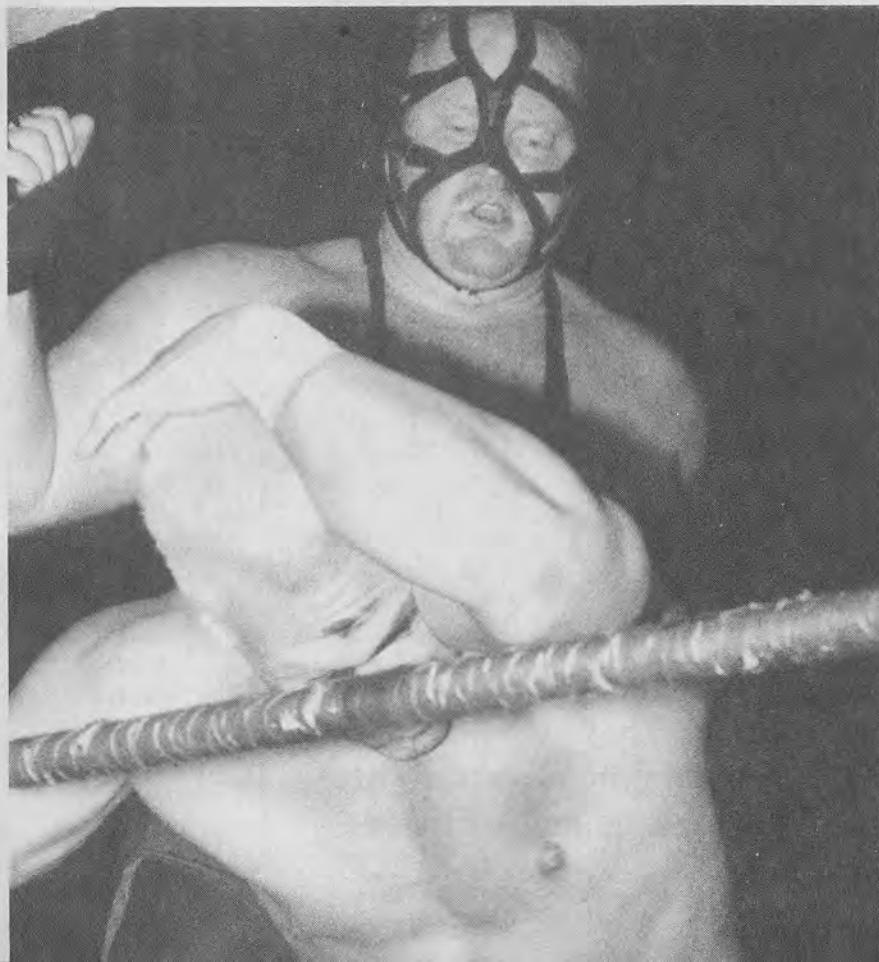
At Starrcade last December, two days before regaining the World belt from Ron Simmons, Vader lost to Sting in the "King Of Cable" tournament final, yet another encounter in which the combatants brutalized one another to an incredible degree.

Then came the "White Castle Of Fear."

No one—not even Sting nor Vader—knows what the next move will



Vader used his crunching power bomb to win the World title from Sting last July (left). Since then, the "Stinger" has rallied from tight spots (bottom left) and dealt Vader equally crushing blows.



be. At the very least, Sting says, there will be no more strap matches.

"We've gone that route before," he stated. "We don't have anything to prove anymore with the strap. That doesn't mean I'm afraid of it; I'm just saying I want the next match on *my* terms. He's World champion, but I have a lot of say in this, too."

"There are many things about the 'White Castle Of Fear' Sting still has not learned," Vader responded. "The strap is only one part of a larger plan. Sting may protest, but he must come to terms with what is inevitable. If he can't deal with it, then the road to the hundredth match will be a hellish one indeed. It's time for his people to pity him."

A growing number of people are starting to pity them both. They maintain that the SuperBrawl strap match proves conclusively it is time for the Sting-Vader feud to end.

They may be right. Sting and Vader are obsessed with one another. Locked in the throes of that obsession, they have lost their perspective. For Vader, the World title has become secondary.

That is not good news for WCW. A champion who disregards the importance of the title belt does a disservice to the entire federation. The situation will only worsen if Vader continues in his war with Sting.

It is time for an end to the hostilities. Or at least agree to a cease fire. □

ARTIFICIAL



In a sport filled with shady managers, Jimmy Hart may have been the most vile and sinister of them all. That's why it's so hard for us to believe that he's a changed man—even if he *does* have Brutus Beefcake and Hulk Hogan standing by his side!

On February 1, 1993, manager Jimmy Hart was at the center of one of the biggest turnabouts in wrestling history.

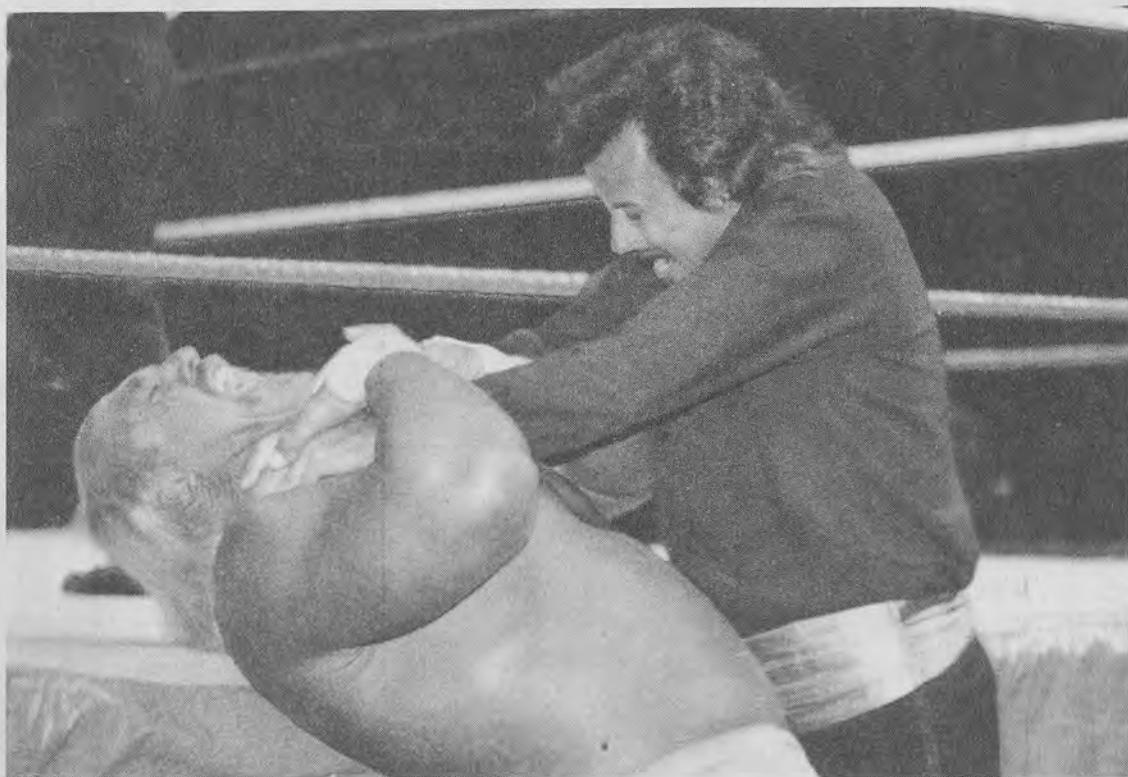
The scene was New York's Manhattan Center. When Brutus Beefcake returned to the ring for the first time in 2½ years and offered an open challenge to WWF wrestlers, World tag team champions Ted DiBiase and Irwin R. Schyster were right there to accept the challenge.

But Hart, Money Inc.'s manager, didn't have this in his game plan. When DiBiase and Schyster joined in a double-ended attack on the defenseless Beefcake, Hart implored them to stop. They didn't stop. By the time the night was over, Hart was consoling Beefcake, who suffered a broken nose. The "Mouth Of The South" had been silenced. Within days, Hart was asking the fans to trust him. He had become the new manager of Beefcake and his returning partner, Hulk Hogan, and was suddenly anti-Money Inc.

But can we trust Hart? The answer is no, if you listen to the editors of *Inside Wrestling*. In this special section, four of our most respected writerstalk about the Jimmy Hart they know best. He is a mean man. He is self-centered. He can't be trusted. Read on ...

HART?

WHY WE DON'T TRUST "THE MOUTH OF THE SOUTH"



Jimmy Hart has dedicated most of his managerial career to the downfall of Hulk Hogan. That's why so many people find it hard to believe him.

DATELINE: ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey. This was after the Slammies, the biggest sham of a wrestling variety show ever, and I'm roaming around the lobby of Caesars Atlantic City. Got a double scotch on the rocks in my right hand and a reporter's notebook in the other. The job is never done.

Not now. Jimmy Hart is standing by a slot machine. He has a cupful of quarters in one hand and a credit card in the other. Intuition tells me what investigation soon proves: Hart is trying to rig the slot machine.

Five minutes later, I returned to the scene and saw Hart arguing with a security guard. I'm not sure what Hart did with the credit card, but there seems to be a bulge in his mouth. He is losing the argument, or so it seems. Then the security guard walks away. Hart goes back to his fun and games.

"Jimmy," I say after walking up to him, "it's me, Matt Brock."

Hart shoots me a look. "Who cares?" he says. I walk away.

Nobody has ever talked to Matt Brock that way. Nobody ever will again. Especially Jimmy Hart.

Don't trust him now. Won't trust him ever again.

By Bill Apter

IVE ALWAYS LOVED guys like Jimmy Hart. He's entertaining, he has a great sense of humor, and he'll do anything to win.

But let me rephrase that. I've always loved characters *like* Jimmy Hart. I've never loved the "Mouth Of The South." Didn't love him four months ago. Don't love him now.

Let's face it: It's impossible to trust this man. His outfits, which are always decorated with G-clefs and dollar signs, give the perfect synopsis of his personality. Hart marches to the beat of his own drum. He is power hungry. He is only out for himself.

Don't be confused by what hap-

pened on February 1 in New York City, and don't be confused by anything that has happened since. Hart got mad at DiBiase and Schyster because they didn't listen to him. His power was being threatened. Hart told Money Inc. to stop jumping and all they did was keep jumping.

His ego couldn't deal with that. So Hart got revenge in his own way: He sided with Brutus Beefcake and Hulk Hogan.

Do you think for one second that this had anything to do with morals? Hart would have gladly joined Money Inc. in a three-on-one attack on Beefcake. That's what he came out to do, but things didn't go his way.

Never forget this: Hart once managed Hulk Hogan. Years later, Hogan

was Hart's biggest enemy. Hart doesn't deal in right and wrong. He deals in himself.

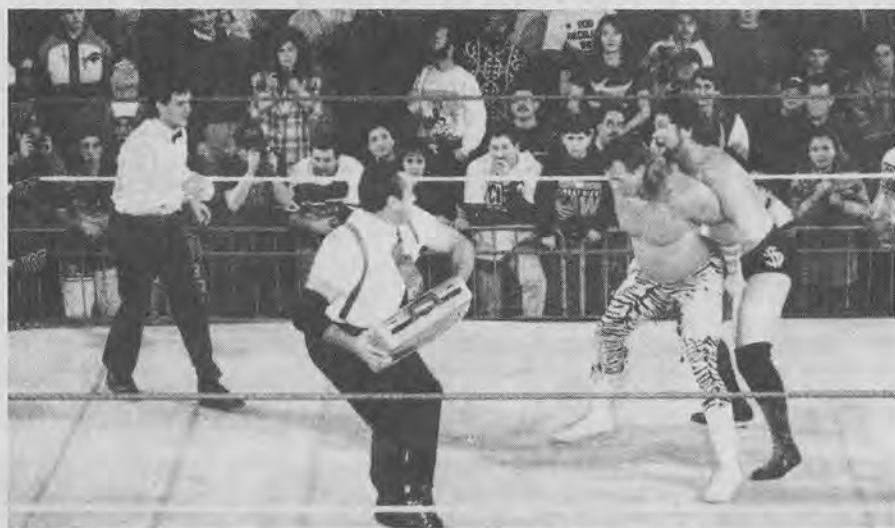
I don't love Jimmy Hart.

By Andy Rodriguez

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, I was a young wrestling reporter in search of a scoop. One day, I paged through my thin Rolodex, came upon Jimmy Hart's number, and gave him a call.

I left a message on his answering machine. The response was a musical number. To this day, he hasn't returned my call.

Years later, I caught Hart and two of his men roughing up a young fan favorite in an alley outside of Madi-



When Irwin R. Schyster attacked Brutus Beefcake with his metal briefcase (above), Hart stepped in and valiantly saved Beefcake from any further beatings (below).



son Square Garden. Last year, one of Hart's closest allies told me that the man can't be trusted.

"He seems like a great guy with his sense of humor and all that," the friend told me. "But he wouldn't go out on a limb for anybody if it didn't benefit himself."

Many, many years ago, the wrestling world was understandably skeptical when Capt. Lou Albano became a fan favorite. As it turned out, Albano's turn was genuine. He has never turned back. I'd be very surprised if Hart was headed down the same route.

My condolences go out to Brutus Beefcake and Hulk Hogan. Now that "The Barber" is back, he's about to have his pockets picked by a man who pretends to be his friend but is actually his worst enemy.

Listen to Hart's laugh. Listen to how he talks. Look at the clothes he wears. The man's world is centered around money. And he doesn't care whose money it is.

By Dave Rosenbaum

YOU KNOW ME. I'm the guy who loves The Honky Tonk Man. Loved him in the WWF and



If Hogan has any questions about Hart's trustworthiness, maybe he should ask Jerry Lawler, who had to put up with Hart's shenanigans for years.

still love him.

But there was always one thing I didn't like about Honky Tonk: his manager, Jimmy Hart. Hart was never out for Honky Tonk's good. Honky Tonk got everything he got by working hard and looking out for himself.

Those in the know say that Hart is the worst manager in wrestling. He's successful because he manages to align himself with the best wrestlers.

As it turns out, he does nothing to further their careers or extend their reigns. He receives absolutely no respect from the WWF's power brokers. That's a bad position for a manager to be in.

There were many reasons why Honky Tonk left the WWF. Believe me, one of the reasons was to get away from Hart.

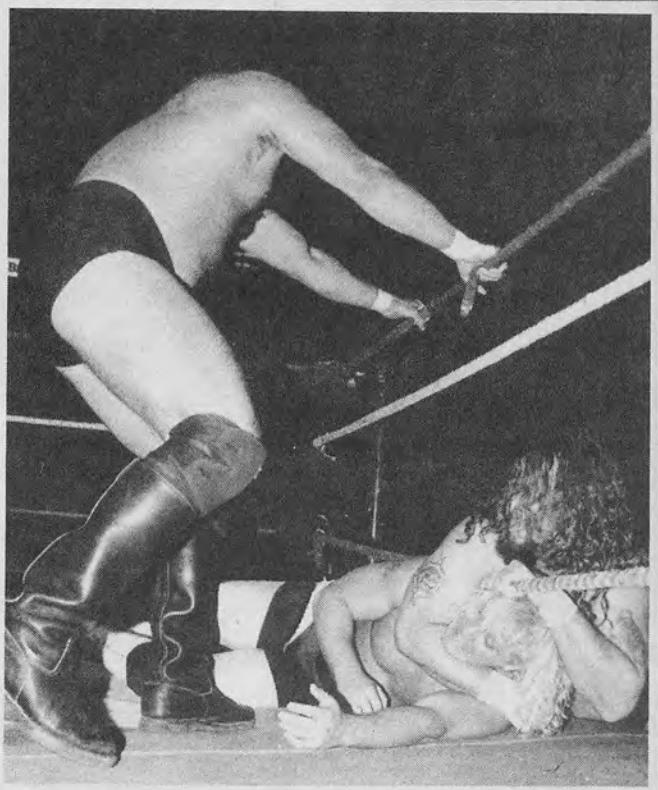
Honky Tonk has never looked back. □



At WrestleMania IV in 1988, Hart managed The Honky Tonk Man against Beefcake. Brutus seems willing to forget those bouts and trust the "Mouth Of The South."

YOU THOUGHT ONE BRU

The Harris brothers double-team Jeff Jarrett (below), a frequent nemesis.



ISER BRODY WAS BAD . . . HERE COME TWO— THE BRUISE BROTHERS!

The last time Ron and Don Harris competed in the USWA, they were just a couple of nice guys trying to make a living. But when they returned last December, they were two different wrestlers entirely. They call them The Bruise Brothers, and a name was never more appropriate

Don Harris' bruising bearhug has Jarrett in big trouble (below).



By Andy Rodriguez

THE BRUISE BROTHERS like to play a little game. They compete against each other to see who can injure the most opponents in a week.

"Do it every week," said Ron Harris. "Doesn't have to be a major injury. A sprained thumb, a bloody nose, whatever. Of course, the bigger the injury, the greater chance for points."

Points?

"Yeah," Don Harris laughed. "One with the most points at the end of the month gets a dinner at the best restaurant in town. Most points at the end of the year gets . . ."

Don started laughing. His brother joined him.

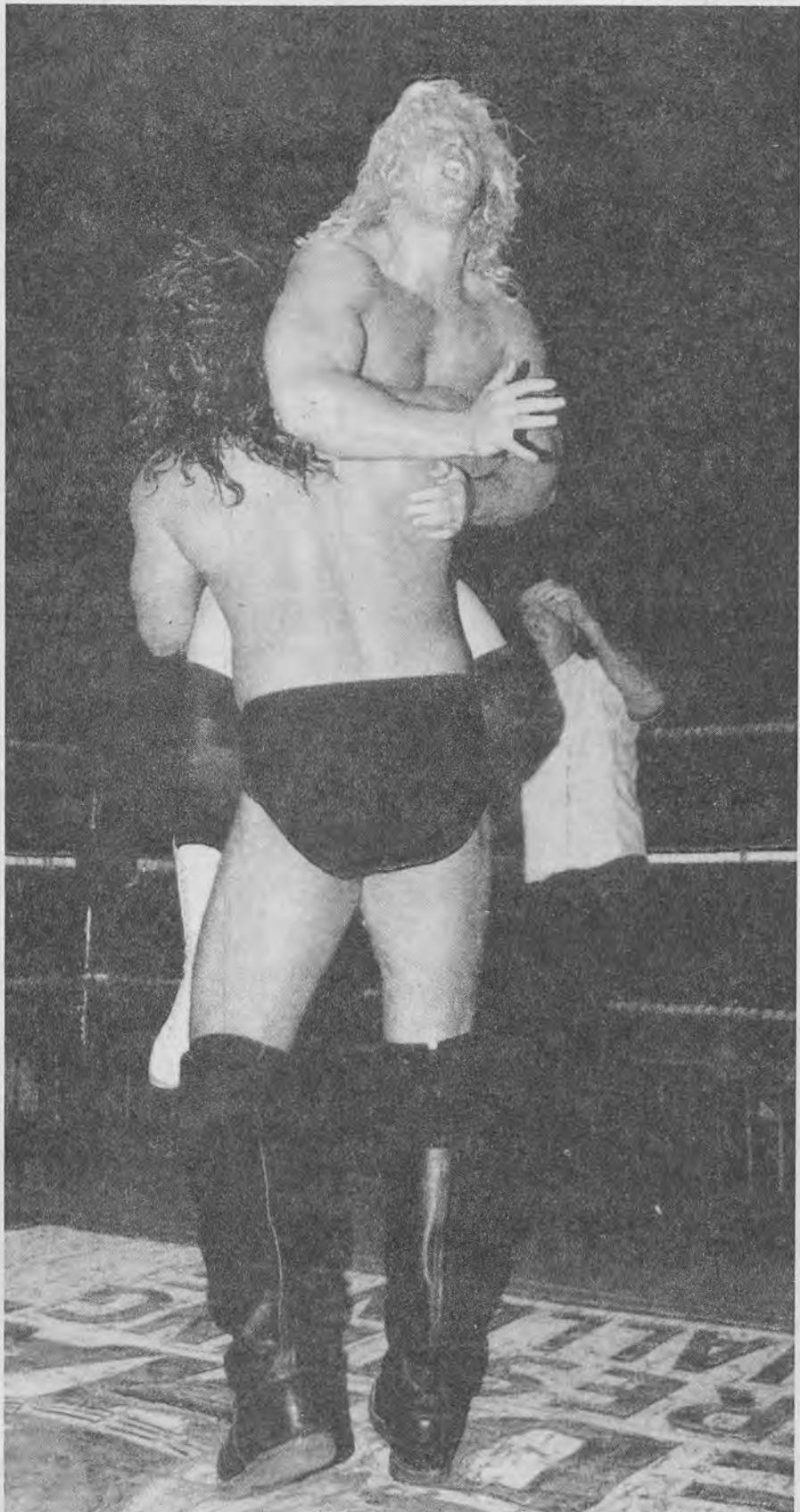
"Better keep that one a secret," Ron said. "We still need *some* friends around here."

With the amount of trouble they have caused over the past several months, Ron and Don Harris certainly

do need all the friends they can get. Their sadistic game may be a joke to them, but to wrestlers like The Moon-dogs, there is no humor. The Bruise Brothers are a serious team that means serious business.

Last December, the Harris brothers returned to the USWA, days after losing the Championship Wrestling USA tag team title in Japan to Jesse Barr and Ryuma Go. Manager Bert Prentice, who met them at the airport in Memphis—and who knew them from their last tour of the area—said he knew from the moment he saw them that these were two men with a purpose.

"These guys, with their scraggly hair and cold stares, had changed something fierce," said the impressed Prentice. "The last time they were here, they were these two, well, kind of gawky guys with short haircuts. They



In the way they handle wrestlers like Jarrett, The Bruise Brothers are sending out a message to every other wrestler in the USWA: Take us seriously, or you are in trouble.

were almost *too* polite to be wrestlers.

"Look at them now. Quite a change, isn't it? They made a 180-degree turn. The Bruise Brothers is

the perfect nickname for them. They look like a couple of Bruiser Brodys—and they're every bit as rough and tough."



Ron Harris says Jarrett can fight back all he wants; he won't escape the Bruisers' wrath.

An appropriate description. In appearance and demeanor, the Harris brothers do remind many people of Bruiser Brody, the legendary wildman who terrorized the sport throughout the 1970s and most of the '80s.

Brody was what Texans like to call "ornery." He created havoc wherever he appeared. More often than not, his goal was to send opponents to the hospital rather than merely defeat them.

He was also independent, a free spirit who refused to settle down in any one federation. He didn't give any favors, but he didn't ask for any, either.

Brody was killed in 1988, but the memory of his mayhem remains a driving force for hundreds of wrestlers young and old, Ron and Don Harris among them.

"Brody didn't take any guff from nobody!" asserted Ron. "He did what he had to do and then afterward he didn't apologize for it! That's exactly how me and my brother are. We don't mess around!"

"Any idiot can see why we've been dominating the USWA," Don thundered. "We're the only team that's not afraid, of anything or anyone, just like Brody. Look at Lawler and Jarrett. They're afraid of doing a damn thing that might upset their fans. The Moon-



Jerry Lawler says he's faced a lot of rugged wrestlers over the years, but none quite so tough as The Bruise Brothers. Perhaps Ron and Don will follow Lawler to the WWF.

dogs, too. They might look pretty formidable, but they can't even go to the bathroom without Richard Lee's approval. Well, we get advice from Prentice, but we call the shots. It's us and nobody else!"

Lawler received a lesson in The Bruise Brothers' method almost immediately after their arrival in the USWA. They almost cost him the heavyweight title when they handed his opponent, Koko B. Ware, a chain. "The King," however, overcame that interference and pinned Ware to regain the belt.

"Since that day, I knew there would be trouble, especially since their only

goal was to hurt me," said Lawler. "They didn't carry any sympathy for Koko. Their aim was to start trouble at the top."

The kind of trouble the Harrises are most interested in creating is Moondog trouble. Over the past few months, the two teams have traded the tag team title almost weekly.

"I will say this about The Bruise Brothers: They're worthy opponents," admitted Moondog manager Lee. "More often than not, we've gotten in there against guys who just roll over and play dead, if you'll pardon the expression. The Harrises are always



Getting whacked with a chair doesn't faze Don Harris. Not much fazes the Bruisers.

giving maximum effort.

"I'm not saying I *like* them," Lee added. "Don't like them at all. But respect them, yes, I do. How can you not?"

The Harrises care little about respect, though. For Ron, only two opinions count: his brother's and his own. Same for Don.

"If we started worrying about what other people thought," Don said, "there's no way we'd be successful. You can't tell me Bruiser Brody ever gave a serious thought to what some other joker said about him. Me and my brother have this thing going. We don't intend to mess it up!"

"Right now, we're sitting here with the tag belts," noted Ron. "A week from now, we might not have them. But titles or not, The Bruise Brothers never change. Just keep plowing straight ahead. Can't stop. Won't stop. There's still too much to get done."

Like Brody, the Bruisers are tough, wild, and unpredictable. However, they are much more interested in titles than Brody ever was.

That makes them more dangerous. This is a warning to the mat world: The Bruise Brothers will be major factors in any federation they choose.

Just like Bruiser Brody. □

**THE STEINERS'
ONE-TWO PUNCH:**

THE WWF WORLD AND I-C TITLES!

In the past, Rick and Scott Steiner have proven themselves as one of the sport's greatest tag teams, but they also impressed as singles stars as well. Don't be shocked if this brother tandem splits up and garners every piece of hardware the WWF has to offer!

While Rick and Scott Steiner (bottom) definitely want the WWF World tag team title, they also have their eyes on Intercontinental champion Shawn Michaels (below) and World titlist Bret Hart (right).



Photos by David Fitzgerald

By Dave Rosenbaum

SO YOU THOUGHT Rick and Scott Steiner came to the WWF to enjoy the scenery and pick up another World tag team title? Turn around and guess again. Review history. Then come back with a better answer.

Rick and Scott Steiner grew up wrestling together on the mats of Michigan. They had natural instincts for each other's thoughts and moves, and it was apparent at an early age that they would go far in wrestling.

In WCW, Rick and Scott realized their boyhood dream by winning the World tag team title and staking a claim to the title of best tag team in the world. They were eventually overshadowed by Terry Gordy and Steve Williams, but they went down injured and fighting.

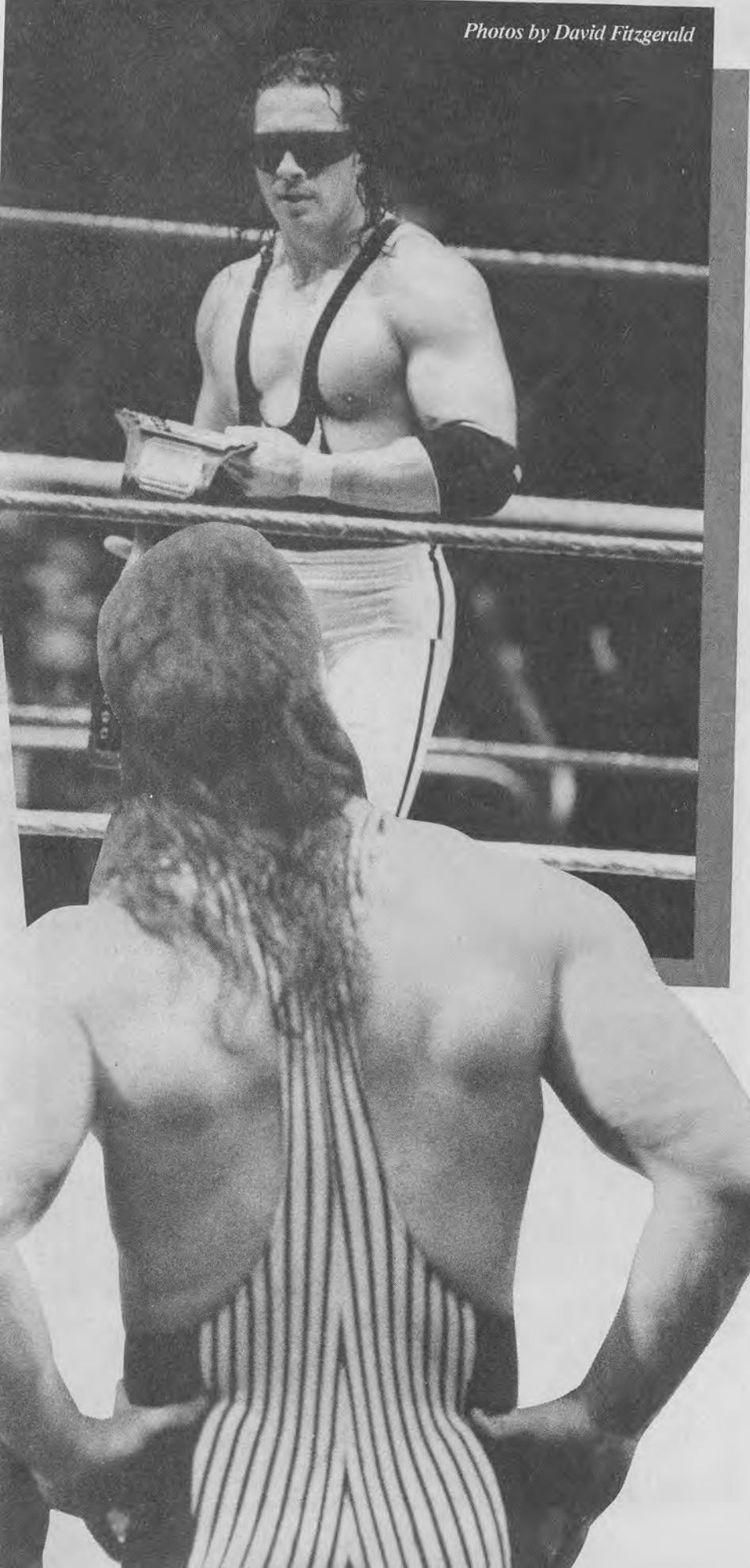
Of course, for all the time they spent together in the ring, they did spend quite a bit of time apart. Whether they were concentrating on different goals or merely manning the fort while one recovered from an injury—and there have been many—Rick and Scott both had time to establish themselves as outstanding singles wrestlers. Both were top contenders for the WCW World title.

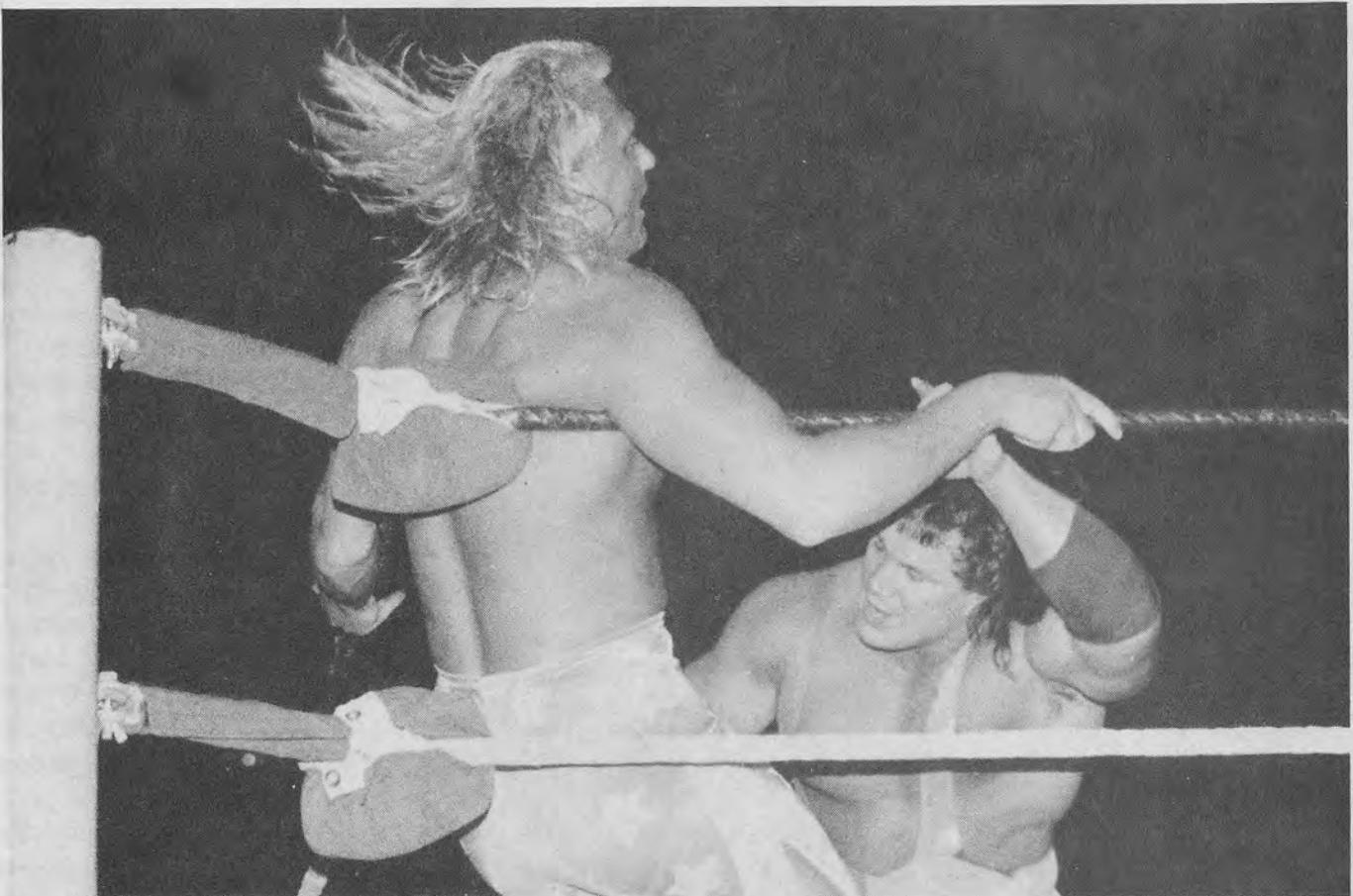
The Steiners had no trouble establishing a presence in the WWF with dominant victories over The Beverly Brothers and several lesser tag teams. They are right at home in a federation where a sense of humor is as much a necessity as a three-point stance.

But neither Rick or Scott can be accused of having tunnel vision. There have been suspicions all along, and insiders have confirmed that Rick and Scott have their sights set on a much larger picture.

They both want the WWF World tag team title. That's for sure.

But Rick wants a piece of Shawn Michaels' Intercontinental title. And Scott wouldn't mind getting his hands on the World title belt Bret Hart is wearing.





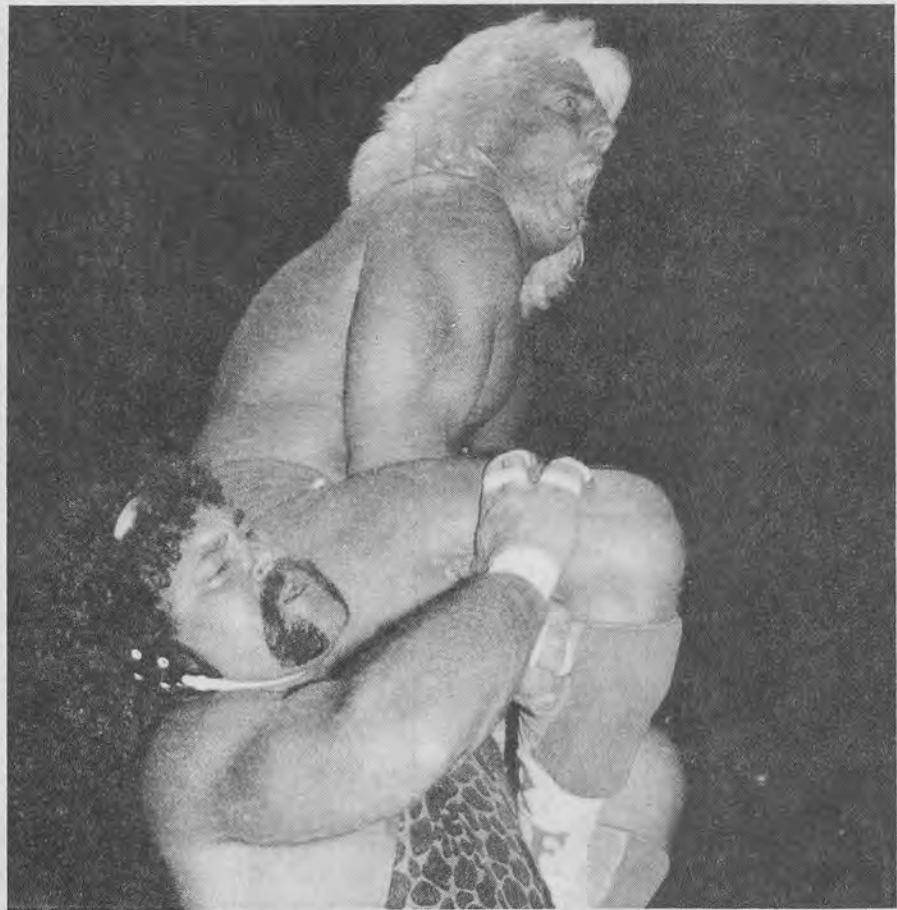
Scott has thoroughly dominated Beau Beverly (above); Rick has done much the same to Blake Beverly (below). The sensational Steiners seek new worlds to conquer.

"The Steiners let the WWF powers know from the very start that they absolutely refused to concentrate solely on tag team wrestling," said a WWF insider. "Sure, they know that it's their greatest strength, but they get great pleasure from wrestling singles, and they've set their sights very high. In fact, I think there's a clause in their contracts that guarantees occasional matches against top contenders for the singles titles."

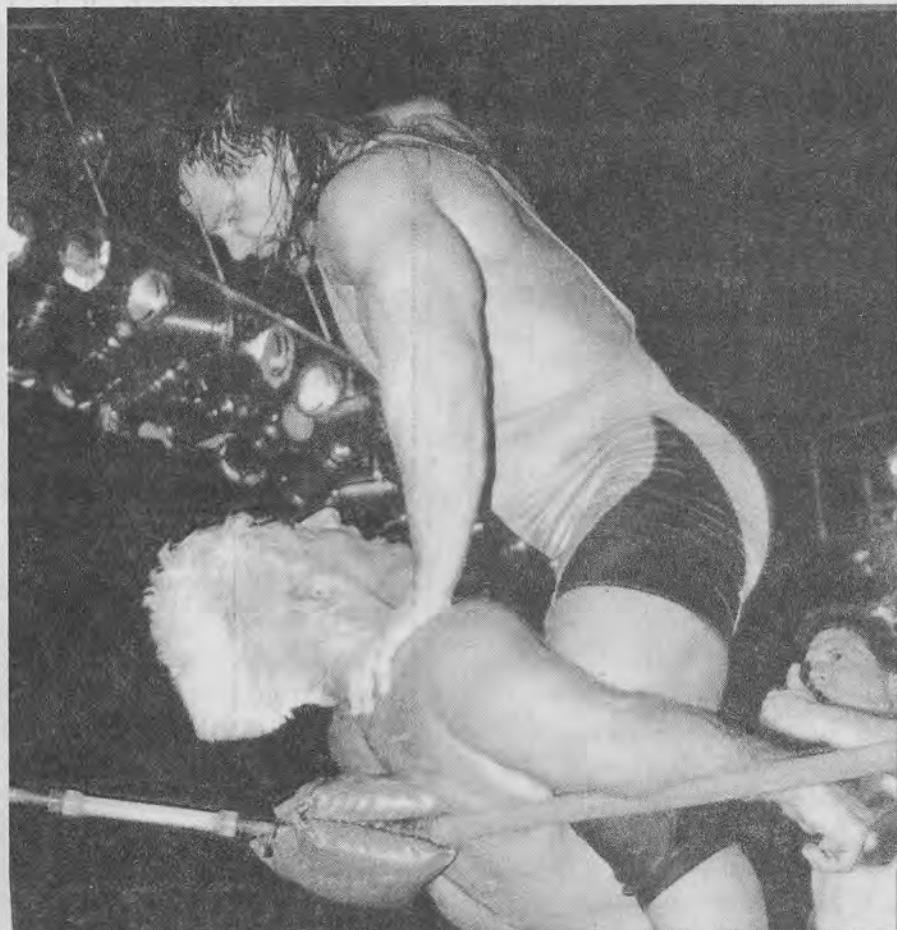
Unfortunately, those chances most likely will come without much prompting. Rick and Scott, carefree and reckless as they are, are extremely injury prone. If opponents aren't trying to sideline them—as they often are—the Steiners are hurting themselves with high-risk and high-impact maneuvers. Since both men are hesitant to use substitute partners, the only way to remain fresh is to wrestle individually.

That's fine with Scott, who once told reporters that he prefers singles wrestling to tag teams. "It's just that I happen to be a better tag team wrestler, especially when I'm with





Ric Flair has received WCW World title challenges from Rick (above) and Scott (below). Few doubt that either brother is capable of holding a singles and tag belt at the same time.



my brother," he said.

Rick feels the same way. He enjoys the camaraderie of tag team wrestling, but gets more satisfaction out of winning a singles match.

There is almost no chance that Rick and Scott will split up and go out on their own. WWF officials signed them as a team and would insist upon keeping them together. But both men have earned the right to be considered serious tag team competitors. Especially now. The singles matchups are perfect.

Let's start with Rick vs. Shawn Michaels. Rick's combination of power and scientific skills would be a match for Michaels' stamina, aerial, and scientific skills, not to mention illegal tactics.

Now let's try Scott vs. Bret Hart, a classic fan favorite vs. fan favorite battle. The suplexes would be flying all over the place as Steiner and Hart tried to wear down each other. What a battle! Both men are so relentless that a match with no time limit could last well into the morning!

Then there's the support system. Rather than being jealous of each other, Rick and Scott always support the other's ambitions. There is no greater power than what is derived when two brothers combine their love and devotion. As we speak, Rick and Scott could be working on a plan for WWF tag team and singles dominance! After all, they didn't come to the WWF to repeat their accomplishments of the WCW. They want much more!

They can get it. The WWF tag team and singles picture is wide open. There are no dominant champions. The Steiners, the perfect team for the WWF with their combination of serious and entertaining styles, could make WWF history. Just imagine:

WWF World tag team champions Rick and Scott Steiner. WWF World champion Scott Steiner. WWF Intercontinental champion Rick Steiner.

All at the same time! □

HOTSEAT

JERRY LAWLER

"NOW YOU CAN CALL ME WWF KING!"

FANS ALL OVER the country—particularly those in Memphis—are still coming to grips with a fact that's hard to fathom: Jerry "The King" Lawler is now entrenched in the WWF.

Not that he's departed the USWA, mind you—that's Lawler's home base, and he still reigns as heavyweight champion there. However, he is also finding the time to do TV commentating in the WWF and compete on a regular basis. More remarkably, he's taking on many of the WWF's finest stars in his favorite arena, the Mid-South Coliseum.

First, "Mr. Perfect" Curt Hennig came to town, and Lawler beat him on a reverse decision. Next, "Narcissist" Lex Luger came strutting through the South, and Lawler send him packing after a string of disqualification victories. Now, Lawler is gearing up for what may be the toughest series of bouts he's had in eight years: A resumption of his feud with the "Macho Man," Randy Savage.

These days, Lawler has a higher public profile than ever, even greater than when he reigned as AWA World champion. But why is it that he is so loved by USWA fans while he's almost

universally reviled during his WWF appearances? Managing Editor Bob Smith, a frequent visitor to the cleanest city in the U.S., returned to Memphis to speak with a man who possesses a great intellect, but also a complex personality . . . the sport's true "King."

“

I've defeated virtually every WWF star before they went to the WWF. Beat 'em all many times.

”

Q: Jerry, it's good to be back in Memphis again. I see that nothing's changed. Everywhere you go, people mob you—and that confuses me a little bit.

A: Why is that?

Q: Well, your comments as a WWF color commentator—and your actions in WWF rings—seem to make you just short of being a rulebreaker again.

A: That's crazy, Bob. I thought you had a little more common sense

than that. Hey, you get what you see with Jerry Lawler. I'm a fighter, and that's what I'm doing in the WWF. Too bad I have to fight the power as well.

Q: What does that mean?

A: You know, I've never really explained to you—or your readers—what I'm doing in the WWF. When those federation heads called me and asked if I'd be interested in being a commentator, I told them flat out that I'd never even consider it. Then, when they called me again, I figured they really thought I'd be the perfect man for the job. That's when I started to reconsider. I figured it would be the best chance for me to get back at those people.

Q: Get back at them for what?

A: To get back at them for more than 10 years of ignoring Memphis wrestling, not to mention every other federation but their own. Those WWF people, both the wrestlers and the administrators, think they're the only game in town. Well, that's not the way it is, and that's not the way it's ever been. This is a big wrestling world with federations all around the





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Now I've got the forum, and I'm going to tell people the truth—and sometimes, the truth hurts.

”

country. For years, those people acted like the USWA, and the CWA before it, never existed. But Memphis fans know that some of the best wrestling anywhere takes place at the Mid-South Coliseum, and everywhere else the USWA presents cards. So for years, I had to sit back and take it when they called guys like Hulk Hogan and Randy Savage the World champion, as if they were the only people who mattered. Hey, I was every bit the fighting champion those guys were, but they had the forum to make people believe it. Now I've got the forum, and I'm going to tell people the truth—and sometimes, the truth hurts.

Q: Maybe, but does the truth have to hurt so much—and all the time? You've been putting down men such as Hogan, Savage, Tatanka, and Crush. They're all fan favorites.

A: Hey, if it can help deflate that big

balloon of public perception those guys have built up, so much the better. You know, I've defeated virtually every WWF star before they went to the WWF. Gosh, your own magazines have been reporting on my victories for years! So I get real sick and tired of hearing that Hogan's undefeated, or Savage is unbeatable, or whatever. I beat 'em all many times, and now that I'm taking on the WWF's best, you can call me "WWF King" as well as the "King" of Memphis.

Q: I do have to give you a bit of credit for this. The USWA's open-door policy has resulted in a steady string of WWF stars coming to Memphis, including Curt Hennig, Doink, and Lex Luger . . .

A: That's right. And I have taken them all on and beaten them all. Please report that so that the whole world knows it, won't you?

Q: Jerry, you know me a little bit better than that by now. If I'm going to report you won, I have to report

that you beat Hennig on a reverse decision, and you scored victories over Luger by disqualification. Those are the facts.

A: Who's denying that? All I'm saying is, we've been perceived as "minor league" by some other federations for too long. Jeff Jarrett, myself, Brian Christopher, The Moondogs, The Harris twins, Mike Samples, these are all major-league wrestlers. I don't see eye-to-eye with all those guys, but they're all real good. But there's a guy coming to Memphis real soon that will really tell the tale. A guy I can't stand working with every week on TV. A guy who went around calling himself the "Macho King" for about a year.

Q: Looks like your hatred for Randy Savage will never die.

A: You bet it won't. Back in 1985, I ran his hide out of Memphis by beating the fight out of him more times than I can count. Sure, he gave me a real hard time—I spilled a lot of blood—but I got the job



USWA champion Jerry Lawler successfully defended his title from Curt Hennig, but did so by reverse decision, raising questions about his claimed dominance over WWF stars.



"The King" enjoys dealing out punishment to WWF competitors like Big Bossman. Lawler says his efforts have given the USWA new respect in the wrestling world.

done. So I make my WWF announcing debut a few months ago, and they tell Savage he was going to be working with me. You know what he said? "Jerry who?" That pompous windbag has got a lot of nerve. I'm the man's worst nightmare, and always have been. He's going to find out wrestling Hulk Hogan was a piece of cake compared to facing me again.

Q: Speaking of Hogan, he recently made his WWF return. What's your opinion about that?

A: Hogan's another guy I beat years back. Frankly, I'm glad to see him around again. After I get done beating Savage, the door is open in Memphis for the "Hulkster." Let him come here and get whipped!

Q: Why does he have to come to Memphis? That's a question that has a lot of fans outside the USWA region thinking. Why don't you wrestle the WWF stars in the WWF arenas?

A: What difference does that make?

Q: Some people are saying that without the USWA's familiar group of referees and officials, you wouldn't have been able to score your recent victories over Luger and Hennig.

A: I won't put up with that kind of talk. That just isn't fair! By saying

that, people are assuming that I've got the USWA officials in my back pocket. It's never been that way, and I'm shocked that a guy with your smarts would even bring up such a notion. When I win a match, I do it on my own merits. Let's change the subject. You really got under my skin with that one!

Q: Not my intention, Jerry. So what are your long-range plans? Is holding the USWA title enough for you?

A: It always has been. I've always considered the USWA a world title because this part of the country is my world. But I must admit, there is a certain impetus to succeed. I'd get a big kick out of beating Bret Hart for the WWF World title just to see the shocked look on the faces of the WWF power brokers. That would be the sweetest revenge for all those years of being categorized, demoralized, and dehumanized.

Q: I can understand your feelings about the past, but what about now? You seem to be going out of your way to anger WWF fans with your commentary.

A: I'm not trying to anger anybody. When I get behind the micro-



After I get done beating Savage, the door is open in Memphis for the 'Hulkster.'

”

phone, I just call things the way I see them. A lot of people get upset because I jaw with Savage all the time, but you have to realize the bad blood that's gone down between me and him. He's a first-class phony. He tried to come on like he loves the fans, but I know the guy for the coward and sadist that he really is. I just can't help myself in that regard. As for other comments, well, if I say that Skinner is a better wrestler than Crush, that's the way I see it.

Q: Do you really think Skinner is a better wrestler than Crush?

A: Sure I do. Skinner's been around for 20 years, while Crush is a relative newcomer. Skinner's a damn fine athlete. I realize a comment like that might not be popular, but I'd rather be right than popular. Memphis fans realize what I'm about. It's just going to take the rest of the country a little while to catch up, that's all! □

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August 1975/Stories include: Valentine, Garea, Rhodes, Sammartino.

February 1976/Stories include: Andre, Strongbow, Lewin, Brazil.

March 1976/Stories include: Ladd, Funk, Sheik, Robinson.

August 1976/Stories include: Funks, Mascaras, Sammartino, Putski.

October 1976/Stories include: Sammartino, Race, Johnson, Jones.



OCTOBER 1976

November 1976/Stories include: Mascaras, Wrestling II, Funk, Sammartino.

December 1976/Stories include: Stasiak, Rhodes, Bockwinkel, Orton.

August 1977/Stories include: Backlund, Graham, Mascaras, Lawler.

September 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Andre, Mascaras, Brisco.

October 1977/Stories include: Andre, Rhodes, Backlund, Mulligan.

March 1978/Stories include: Rhodes, Valentine, Backlund, Bockwinkel.

April 1978/Stories include: Backlund, Graham, Steamboat, Bruiser.

December 1978/Stories include: Sammartino, Rhodes, Wrestling II, Bravo.

January 1979/Stories include: Sammartino, Mulligan, Rhodes, Backlund.

February 1979/Stories include: Race, Sammartino, Steamboat, Ladd.

April 1979/Stories include: Andre, Flair, Backlund, Jones.

June 1979/Stories include: Rhodes, Superstar, Bockwinkel, Backlund.

September 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Mascaras, Strongbow, Garvin.

February 1980/Stories include: Patera, Snuka, Santana, Albano.

May 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Murdoch, Mulligan, Bockwinkel.

June 1980/Stories include: Putski, Andre, Hernandez, Keirn.

August 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Wrestling II, Baker, Koloff.

September 1980/Stories include: Mascaras, Rhodes, Ladd, Iron Sheik.

November 1980/Stories include: Rhodes, Putski, Bockwinkel, Koloff.

January 1981/Stories include: Race, Snuka, Morales, Slater.



JANUARY 1981

April 1981/Stories include: Albano, Sammartino Jr., Race, McGraw.

May 1981/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Von Erich, Backlund, Santana.

September 1981/Stories include: Patera, Koloff, Khan, Junkyard Dog.

February 1982/Stories include: Valentine, Flair, Steamboat, Rhodes.

March 1982/Stories include: Rich, Backlund, Idol, Spoiler.

April 1982/Stories include: Rhodes, Andre, Von Erich, Piper.

May 1982/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Hogan, Von Erich.

June 1982/Stories include: Valentine, Von Erich, Slaughter, Morales.

July 1982/Stories include: Hogan, Rhodes, Steamboat, Adonis.

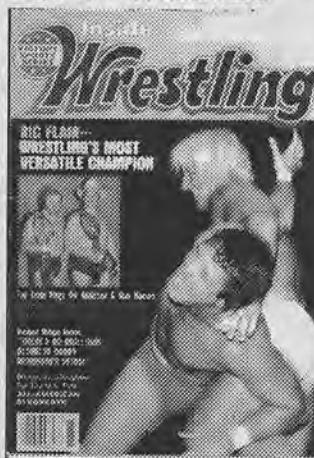
August 1982/Stories include: Andre, Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Backlund.

September 1982/Stories include: Atlas, Piper, Lawler, Brody.

October 1982/Stories include: Rich, Andre, Piper, Dillon.

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Von Erich, Slaughter.

December 1982/Stories include: Mulligan, Rich, Lawler, Grand Wizard.



NOVEMBER 1982

February 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, DiBiase, Race.

March 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Graham, Johnson, Funk.

April 1983/Stories include: Snuka, Patera, Kabuki, Rich.

May 1983/Stories include: Rich, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat.

June 1983/Stories include: Studd, Garvin, Rogers, Orton.

July 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Freebirds, Rhodes, Youngblood.

August 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Garvin, Sullivan, Lawler.

September 1983/Stories include: Zbysko, Piper, Andre, Hayes.

October 1983/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Junkyard Dog, Rhodes.

November 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Reed, Von Erich, Dillon.

December 1983/Stories include: Von Erich, Samoans, Valiant, Road Warriors.

March 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Rich, Rhodes, Garvin.

April 1984/Stories include: Flair, Steamboat, Superstar, Windham.

May 1984/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Steamboat, Rotundo, Von Erich.

June 1984/Stories include: Flair, Slaughter, Cornette, DiBiase.

July 1984/Stories include: Valiant, Flair, Martel, Wrestling II.

August 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Idol, Spoiler.

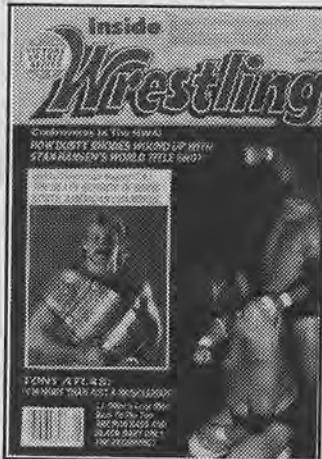
September 1984/Stories include: Martel, Brody, Von Erich, Iron Sheik.

October 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Road Warriors, Steamboat, Piper.

November 1984/Stories include: Rhodes, Rich, Hernandez, Warriors.

December 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Warriors, Sullivan, Magnum T.A.

January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich.



JANUARY 1985

February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair.

March 1985/Stories include: Backlund, Billy Jack, Koloffs, Von Erichs.

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Alano & Hogan, Steamboat, Gordy.

May 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Garvin, Albano, Koloffs.

June 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Slaughter, Von Erichs, Studd & Patera.

July 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Nikita, Warriors.

August 1985/Stories include: Wrestlemania, Zbysko vs. The Tonga Kid.

September 1985/Stories include: Piper, Flair, Fantastics, Magnum T.A.

October 1985/Stories include: Russian menace, Von Erichs, Rude & Barr.

November 1985/Stories include: Steamboat, Adams, Freebirds, Cornette.

December 1985/Stories include: Santana, Brody, Andersons, Murdoch.

January 1986/Stories include: Steamboat, Mike Von Erich, Warriors.

February 1986/Stories include: R'n'R Express, Warriors, Mulligan & Windham.

March 1986/Stories include: Windham & Rotundo, Warriors, Rude.

April 1986/Stories include: Scott Hall, Rhodes, Flair, Andre, Bill Watts.

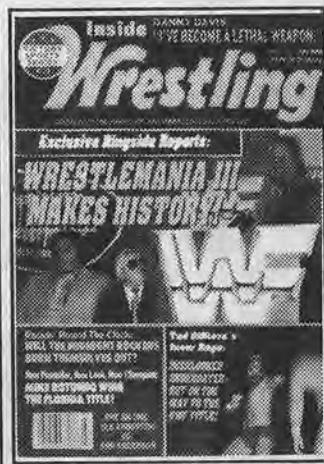
May 1986/Stories include: Randy Savage, Stan Hansen, Rock 'n' Rolls.

June 1986/Stories include: Bulldogs, Windham-Flair, Lance Von, Blanchard.

July 1986/All-American Special Issue. Stories include: Hogan, Slaughter, T.A.

August 1986/Stories include: Wrestlemania 2, Garvin, Martel, Fab Ones.

September 1986/Stories include: Andre, Rhodes-T.A., Adams, Windham.



JULY 1987

July 1987/Stories include: Danny Davis, DiBiase, Rockers, Rotundo, Andersons.

August 1987/Stories include: Dusty & Nikita, Hogan, Mike Von, Cornette.

September 1987/Stories include: Hogan-Race, R&R Exp., Rich, Honky Tonk. October 1987/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan, Taylor-Adonis, Lawler.

November 1987/Stories include: War Games, Mr. T, Bulldogs, Rhodes.

December 1987/Stories include: Freebirds, Rhodes, Magnum, Savage, Perez.

January 1988/Stories include: R&R-Horsemen, Hogan, Flair-Garvin.

February 1988/Stories include: Savage, Kevin Von, Sting, Tully & Arn.

March 1988/Stories include: Bigelow, Adams, Koloff, Honky Tonk, Freebirds.

April 1988/Stories include: Luger-Flair, Ultimate Warrior, Andre-Hogan-Dibiase.

May 1988/Stories include: Zbyszko, DiBiase, Warriors, Rockers, Fritz Von.

June 1988/Stories include: Warriors, Savage, R&R Express, Baby Doll.

July 1988/Stories include: Hogan-Savage-Dibiase, Kerry & Hayes, Sting.

August 1988/Stories include: Savage, Missy Hyatt, Sting, Hayes, Honky Tonk.

October 1988/Stories include: Megapowers vs. Megabucks, Horsemen, Lawler.

November 1988/Stories include: Rhodes, Kerry, Luger, Muraco, Freebirds.

December 1988/Stories include: Powers of Pain, Ultimate, Flair, Piper.

January 1989/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan, Sting, Arn, Kerry-Lawler.

February 1989/Stories include: Hogan-Bossman, Tully & Arn, Warriors-Windham-Steiner.

March 1989/Stories include: Hennig, Midnights-Midnights, Fuller & Golden, Ultimate.

May 1989/Stories include: Hogan, Steiner, Morton, Bad Co., Taylor.

June 1989/Stories include: Hogan-Savage, Luger, Steamboat-Flair.

July 1989/Stories include: Savage, Windham, Kerry, Demolition, Sting.

August 1989/Stories include: Hulkamania, Steamboat, Rude, Cornette.

September 1989/Stories include: Savage-Hogan, Luger, Mascaras, Rhodes.

October 1989/Stories include: Hall & Pillman & Vicious, Hennig, Swats vs. Warriors, Rhodes.

November 1989/Stories include: Elizabeth, Sting, Luger, Paul E., Mascaras.

December 1989/Stories include: Rhodes, Flair, Hogan-Zeus, Embry.

January 1990/Stories include: Hogan, Sting-Flair, Roberts-Dibiase.

February 1990/Stories include: Warriors-Skyscrapers, Zenk, Rude-Piper.

April 1990/Stories include: Starrcade '89, Ultimate, Rhodes, Sawyer.

May 1990/Stories include: Hogan-Ultimate, Luger, Woman, Lawler, LPWA.

June 1990/Stories include: Sting, Saito-Zbyszko, Earthquake, Ultimate, Jarrett.

July 1990/Stories include: Steiners, Sting, Warrior & Hogan, Earthquake.

August 1990/Stories include: Luger-Flair, Hogan, Warrior, Taylor.

September 1990/Stories include: Hogan, Duggan, JYD, Adams, Horsemen.

October 1990/Stories include: Sting, Legion of Doom, Bushwhackers, Gigante.

November 1990/Stories include: Flair, Hogan, Vicious, Slaughter, Orients.

December 1990/Stories include: Hogan, Sting, Kerry, Cornette, Zbyszko.

January 1991/Stories include: LOD, Adams, Steiners, Lawler-Funk.

February 1991/Stories include: Taylor, Hogan, Martel, Sting, all-annoying team.

March 1991/Stories include: Hogan-Earthquake, Roberts-Martel, Sting.

April 1991/Stories include: Flair-Sting, Steiners, Piper, Zbyszko, Slaughter.

May 1991/Stories include: Savage-Warrior, Steiners, Sting, Virgil.

June 1991/Stories include: Steiners, LOD, Koloff, I-C belt, Dundees.

July 1991/Stories include: Hogan, Virgil, Funk, Nasty, Steiners, Spivey.

August 1991/Stories include: Warrior-Undertaker, Steiners, Flair, Steamboat.

September 1991/Stories include: Justice-Hogan, Hyatt, Rude, Hennig.

October 1991/Stories include: Savage & Liz, Hogan & Warrior, Luger.

November 1991/Stories include: Hogan-Savage, Luger, Flair, War Games.

December 1991/Stories include: SummerSlam, York, Simmons.

January 1992/Stories include: Sting, Freebirds, Hart, Rhodes, Rotundo.

February 1992/Stories include: Luger, Hart, Patriot, Rude, Thess-Rogers.

March 1992/Stories include: Hogan-Flair, Steiners, Badd, Survivor Series.

April 1992/Stories include: Hart, Steiners, Liger-Pillman, Roberts.

May 1992/Stories include: Justice-Hogan, Liger, Gilbert, Repo Man.

June 1992/Stories include: Sting, Hogan, Race, M.A. Bagwell, Atlas.

July 1992/Stories include: Undertaker, Vader, Sherri/Michaels, Madusa.

August 1992/Stories include: Savage-Flair, Jack-Badd, Christopher, LOD.

September 1992/Stories include: War Games, Hogan, Vader, Kamala.

October 1992/Stories include: SummerSlam, Steiner-Muta, Simmons.

November 1992/Stories include: Flair, Warrior, Vader, top rope rule.

December 1992/Stories include: Flair, Ramon, Heavenly Bodies, Jarrett.

February 1993/Stories include: LOD, Smoky Mountain, Rude, Jimmy Hart.

March 1993/Stories include: Michaels, Nikita Koloff, Windham-Rhodes.

April 1993/Stories include: Changing faces, Flair, Sting-Vader, Dangerously.

May 1993/Stories include: Wrestlemania IX analysis, Andre tribute, Muta.

OCTOBER 1986

October 1986/Stories include: Flair-Lugar, Savage, Fantastics, Warriors.

November 1986/Stories include: Warriors-Flair, Bulldogs, Watts, Adams.

December 1986/Stories include: Hogan-Adonis, R&R Express, Baby Doll.

January 1987/Stories include: Rude-Flair, Piper, T.A., Taylor.

February 1987/Stories include: Hogan-Piper-Orndorff, Taylor, Flair.

March 1987/Stories include: Flair, Missy, Luger, Bulldogs, Koloffs.

April 1987/Stories include: Windham, Steamboat, Ellering, Duggan.

May 1987/Stories include: Windham & Luger, Steamboat, Hogan-Andre.

June 1987/Stories include: Piper-Adonis, Horsemen, Adams, Hall, Brody.

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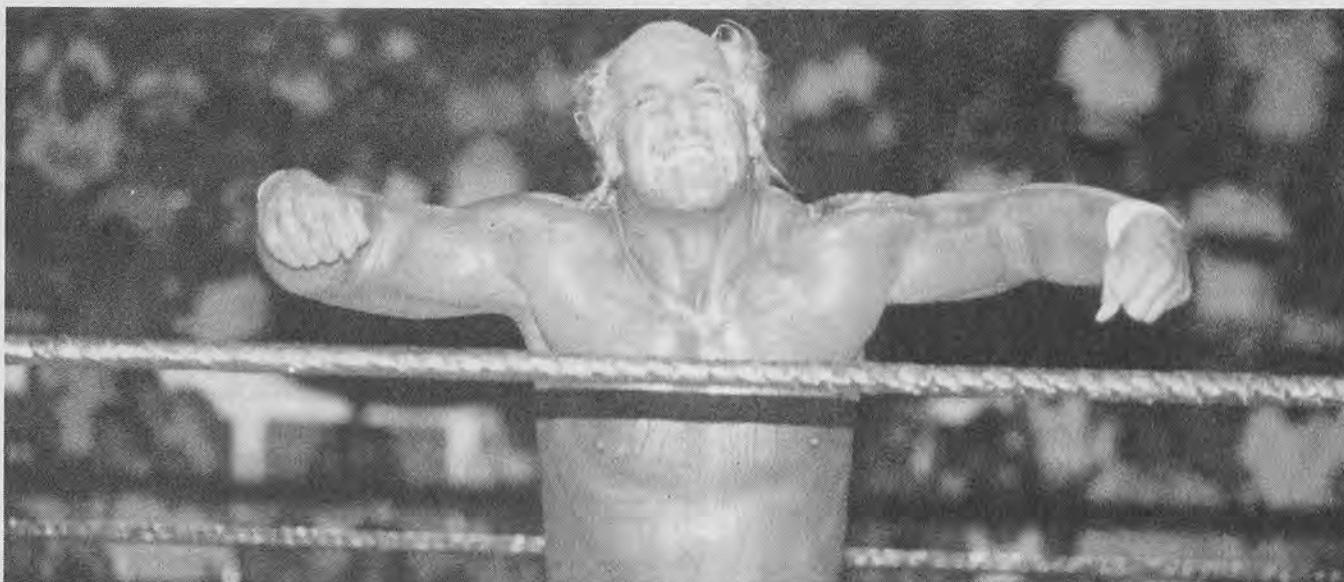
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SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from page 5)



Hulk Hogan is spreading his wings again in the WWF, and that thrills reader Mike Facciani.

HE'S BACK

I think the WWF desperately needed Hulk Hogan back. As if his absence wasn't enough, the WWF also lost key players in Ric Flair, Roddy Piper, Sid Justice, Ultimate Warrior, British Bulldog, and The Legion of Doom in the past year.

Bret Hart is a second-rate World champion, in my book. Hulk Hogan is

much more colorful and charismatic than the "Hitman" could ever hope to be. I'd love to see Hogan challenge Hart for the WWF belt. The "Hulkster" would destroy this pretender to the throne in no uncertain terms and bring some excitement back into the WWF.

Also, Hogan's long-awaited showdown with Lex Luger could finally

happen now that he has returned. Bret Hart vs. Yokozuna at WrestleMania IX is pitiful compared to the highly anticipated main events of previous WrestleManias when Hogan was headlining the card. The WWF was slipping and needed to get back in gear. Bringing back Hulk Hogan was a big step in the right direction.

MIKE FACCIANI
Johnstown, PA

VAN'S THE MAN!

After watching WCW World champion Big Van Vader defeat Sting at SuperBrawl III, I'm convinced that there's nobody that can take the title from this monster. While WCW boasts many talented athletes such as Dustin Rhodes, Rick Steamboat, Barry Windham, and, yes, Sting, I really cannot imagine any of these men pinning Vader for the belt. With seven-time World champion Harley Race in his corner as well, Vader may be wearing the belt for a long time.

Maybe a returning Rick Rude or Ric Flair would have a better shot at dethroning Vader, but I don't think so. Even WCW newcomer Davey Boy Smith will fall short in his quest for the WCW World championship. Face it, fans, Van's the man.

RICH GIBSON
Minneapolis □



Thanks to the guidance of Harley Race, Big Van Vader may be wearing the WCW World championship belt for a long, long time, in the opinion of reader Rich Gibson.

THIS MONTH IN...

PRO **Wrestling** ILLUSTRATED



Learn why all of WCW wants to give **RIC FLAIR** a hellish homecoming!



Role reversal, title reversal:
JERRY LAWLER beats **CURT HENNIG**!

PLUS . . .

Has **HARLEY RACE** lost control of **BIG VAN VADER**? . . . Is the "new" **KAMALA** human enough to be champion? . . . Mirror, mirror, on the wall, one of these WWF stars—**CURT HENNIG, LEX LUGER, RAZOR RAMON, OR LEX LUGER**—is is due for a fall . . . A revealing "Press Conference" with "**BEAUTIFUL BOBBY EATON**

All this—and much more . . .
in the June 1993 issue of
Pro Wrestling Illustrated

NOW ON SALE!

Wrestler



HULK HOGAN'S real reason for returning: **BRET HART**!



Learn why **BARRY WINDHAM'S** greatest triumph will turn to tragedy

PLUS . . .

Don't cash in your chips on **VINNIE VEGAS** . . . Learn the facts behind **KERRY VON ERICH'S** suicide . . . **GIANT GONZALES'** former confidant speaks out: "They've made my friend into a monster!" . . . If you think **TATANKA** is great now, just wait!

All this—and much more . . .
in the June 1993 issue of
The Wrestler

NOW ON SALE!

The telephone wires sizzle every month as two top wrestlers voice their rage and hostility toward each other. This is the unedited transcript of their conversation, your chance to see the raw emotion that results when two antagonists face off

... One on One

WE DON'T KNOW if Cactus Jack is truly worthy of his fan favorite status, but we do know this about the unpredictable madman from New Mexico: He despises Paul Orndorff.

Ever since Orndorff turned on Cactus Jack in December, he has been the target of Jack's wanton destruction. Jack came after him with a shovel later in that card, then interfered in the Thunderdome cage match at Clash of the Champions XXII, breaking into the locked cage with boltcutters and attacking Orndorff. He pinned "Mr. Wonderful" to score the victory for the outmanned fan favorites. Orndorff vowed revenge and got his opportunity at SuperBrawl III, where he met Jack in a falls-count-anywhere match.

Orndorff is a highly skilled technician who nearly beat Hulk Hogan for the WWF World title. But he was out of his element against Jack, the unofficial champion of falls-count-anywhere matches. Jack began the festivities by again attacking Orndorff with a shovel. Orndorff zeroed in on Jack's injured knee with punches and kicks before pounding the sore joint with a chair. But when "Mr. Wonderful" let his guard down for just an instant, Jack went to the shovel again, clobbering Orndorff in the head and scoring the pin.

"Mr. Wonderful" hasn't been feeling very wonderful lately, and we're pretty sure we know why. Orndorff is thoroughly frustrated with Cactus Jack. The two had set out to destroy Sting; now Cactus Jack is defending the "Stinger," preventing Orndorff from completing his mission and giving

ONE ON ONE



"You're still woozy from all those shots to the head I gave you. That sound of the metal shovel against your skull was music to my ears."

—Cactus Jack

him a beating in the process. Jack, meanwhile, has become perhaps WCW's most popular wrestler by using his sadism against the men with whom he once shared a locker room. There were plenty of contrasting views when we hooked up these two and let them go "One On One."

CACTUS JACK:

Guess who.

PAUL ORNDORFF:

Judging from your tone of voice, this could only be the biggest traitor in the whole world.

CJ: Traitor? You're calling me a traitor, Paul Orndorff? You, who attacked me for no reason? You're nothing but a coward, Orndorff.

PO: I'm a coward!? What do you call hitting someone from the blind side with a shovel? What's that? The act of a brave man? You know, they call you unpredictable, but it wasn't so hard to figure out where you'd turn up. Face it, Jack. You'll team with anyone crazy enough to have you as a partner. And Paul Orndorff isn't that crazy.

CJ: Paul Orndorff isn't that good, ei-

V ONE



"You say you like music? How'd you like to hear a funeral march? Your time is running out, Jack, and sooner than you think."

—Paul Orndorff

ther. You wanted me to help you take out Sting, because you knew you couldn't do it yourself. At least when I wrestled him, it was man against man. You see, I'm not afraid to lose. I'm not afraid to get hurt. Losing and getting hurt are part of this sport, and nobody deals with it better than me.

PO: Yeah, but you're still a loser, Jack, and that's why we had to get rid of you. Let me ask you something: You've wrestled against that pansy Sting, and with him. Which is better?

CJ: With him, because when I'm with him, I'm against you. You think you know what a feud is? You have no idea what you are in for, my friend. I'm just getting started. You're nothing but a pile of dirt, and that's why I'm using a shovel. Because that's what's needed to get rid of the dirt.

PO: Look who's talking about dirt! I saw you eating out of a garbage can the other night. When's the last time you bathed? I can't believe anyone even takes a match with you, you stink so much.

CJ: You have to be willing to get

down and dirty in this sport, Orndorff. You're so busy trying to look pretty that you'll never understand that. You think that your tan and your robe makes you a better wrestler? Get real! Hitting a flying clothesline from the top rope, even though you have a separated shoulder—that makes you a better wrestler.

PO: What do you know about wrestling? The only wrestling you've done in your career has been in the last two months, and that's been with your conscience! I don't need the approval of the fans to go about my business, which is more than I can say for you.

CJ: Hey, the fans had nothing to do with it. I did what I had to do to you and Vader and Windham in the cage match, and the fans cheered me because they knew I was doing the right thing. I'm not wrestling to please them. I'm wrestling to please me—and hurt you. If they like what they see, more power to 'em.

PO: The fans are so blind, they can't see you for what you really are, Jack. You're no better than Sting or any other of the pandering fan favorites. In fact, you're worse, because you were one of us once. I get sick just talking about it.

CJ: I think you're sick because you're still woozy from all those shots in the head I gave you. You know, that sound of the metal shovel against your skull was music to my ears.

PO: You say you like music? How'd you like to hear a funeral march? Oh, wait a minute. You won't be able to hear it, because the funeral will be yours. Your time is running out, Jack, and sooner than you think.

CJ: Time is something I've got plenty of, Paul Orndorff. I've got nothing better to do in 1993 than to beat your sorry behind all over WCW. I don't care about titles or glory unless I can hurt someone along the way. And nothing makes me happier than putting the hurt on you. Bang, bang!

PO: I'm glad we're not partners anymore. You're not playing with a full deck.

CJ: Maybe not, but I'm winning anyway. □

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DRESSING ROOM DOOR

(Continued from page 12)



Doug Gilbert has helped his older brother Eddie through some tough matches. Now, they're feuding violently in the USWA.

Eddie sometimes has a hard time bearing his brother. This is one of those times. Maybe their feud started with a meaningless argument, but no arguments between brothers are meaningless. Besides, it wasn't their first disagreement. They had been adding up.

"My brother's always been a bit spoiled," Eddie said. "If he doesn't get his way, he just keeps crying and yelling until he does. I

just got tired of it."

Doug, of course, claims he's 100 percent correct in their feud and, of course, accuses Eddie of being spoiled. Meanwhile, many of the other wrestlers in the dressing rooms are amused by the whole deal.

"It's usually sad when families fight, but in this case it's funny," one USWA wrestler said. "It's all they talk about."

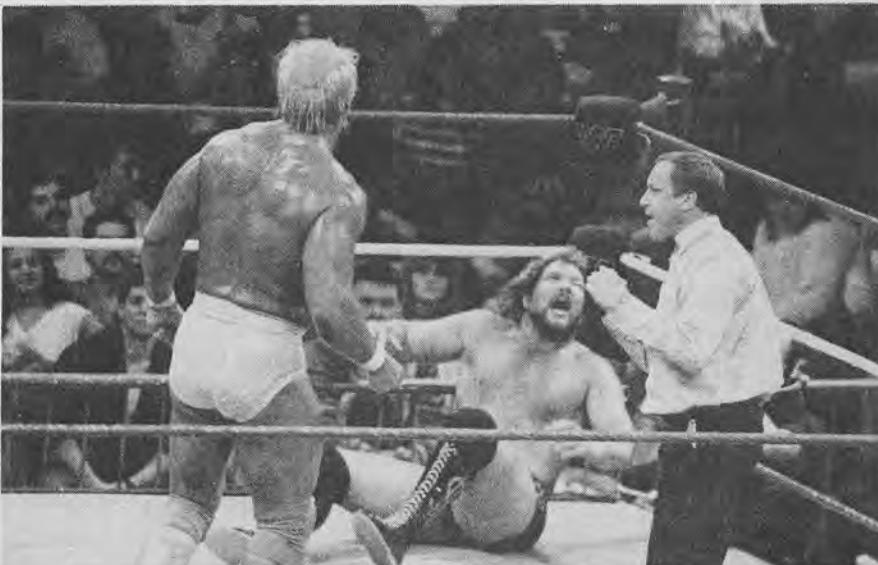
Over in the WWF, all anybody's talking about is the return of Hulk Hogan, and that's where this column will remain for the next 400 words.

No surprise: Hogan returned to the WWF after a brief retirement.

The surprise: He and Brutus Beefcake are stupid enough to trust Jimmy Hart. Nobody ever said Hogan got where he did on brains.

The official word is that Hogan was incensed by Money Inc.'s attack on Beefcake, but the word on the grapevine is that Hogan can't do without wrestling and, in fact, thinks he needs the ring to keep his movie career moving.

Moving forward? I'll be the judge of that after seeing Mr.



Hulk Hogan is back and he's after Money Inc.'s Ted DiBiase. However, the "Hulkster" probably would have returned even if Money Inc. hadn't attacked Brutus Beefcake.

Nanny, which at press time was still awaiting national release. Judging by Hogan's previous efforts, we're not looking at another *Scent Of A Woman*.

Hogan belongs in the ring. Case closed. He doesn't belong on a movie screen. Sure, there are people who absolutely love the man, and I have no problem with that. But nobody ever said that great athletes make great actors (or vice versa) and excellence in one field doesn't guarantee excellence in another.

Terry Bradshaw. Great football quarterback. TV boob.

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. Great basketball player. Horrible actor.

Steve Garvey ... need I say more?

Some people were just born for the ring. I don't know why that's so difficult for them to grasp. Hogan was born with a gift. He's not a good scientific wrestler, but he learned how to harness his power and determination and become a wrestling champion. He worked hard toward an achievable goal. He reached that goal.

Here's the point: I don't care why Hogan is back in the ring. I'm not a big fan of Hogan, but I don't have to be a fan. I'm a journalist. And since a journalist always looks for good stories, having Hogan back makes for the best stories of all.

He can beat Bret Hart. He can't beat Yokozuna. He'd destroy Razor Ramon. I think, before long, he'll have to lay his hands on Jimmy Hart.

I also think Hogan was looking for a reason to return. Money Inc. gave him that reason. The best part about this is that Hogan is returning into such a competitive climate. WWF wrestlers are bigger and better than ever.

It'll be interesting to see how he survives in the WWF's new Land of the Giants.

And there. I didn't say a word.

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Section: Overrated/underrated; Dream match: Michaels vs. Jannetty; Money Inc. vs. Olympic wrestlers

DECEMBER/92

Section: 21st century stars; Dream match: R. Steiner & Williams vs. S. Steiner & Gordy; Money Inc., Jarrett

JANUARY/93

Section: Wrestling's best arenas; Dream match: Halloween Horror; Undertaker-Flair; Justice; Steamboat

MARCH/93

Section: Hot 1993 wrestlers; Dream match: Hart vs. Simmons; Michaels/Jannetty; Steamboat/Pilman; Tyson to wrestle.

FALL/83

SUMMER/87

SUMMER/90

AUGUST/91

SEPTEMBER/92

SPRING/84

FALL/87

AUGUST/90

OCTOBER/91

OCTOBER/92

FALL/84

WINTER/87

OCTOBER/90

DECEMBER/91

DECEMBER/92

WINTER/84

SPRING/88

DECEMBER/90

FEBRUARY/92

JANUARY/93

SPRING/85

WINTER/88

FEBRUARY/91

APRIL/92

MARCH/93

SUMMER/85

FALL/89

APRIL/91

JUNE/92

AUGUST/92

FALL/86

WINTER/89

JUNE/91

AUGUST/92

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THE INSIDER

(Continued from page 14)

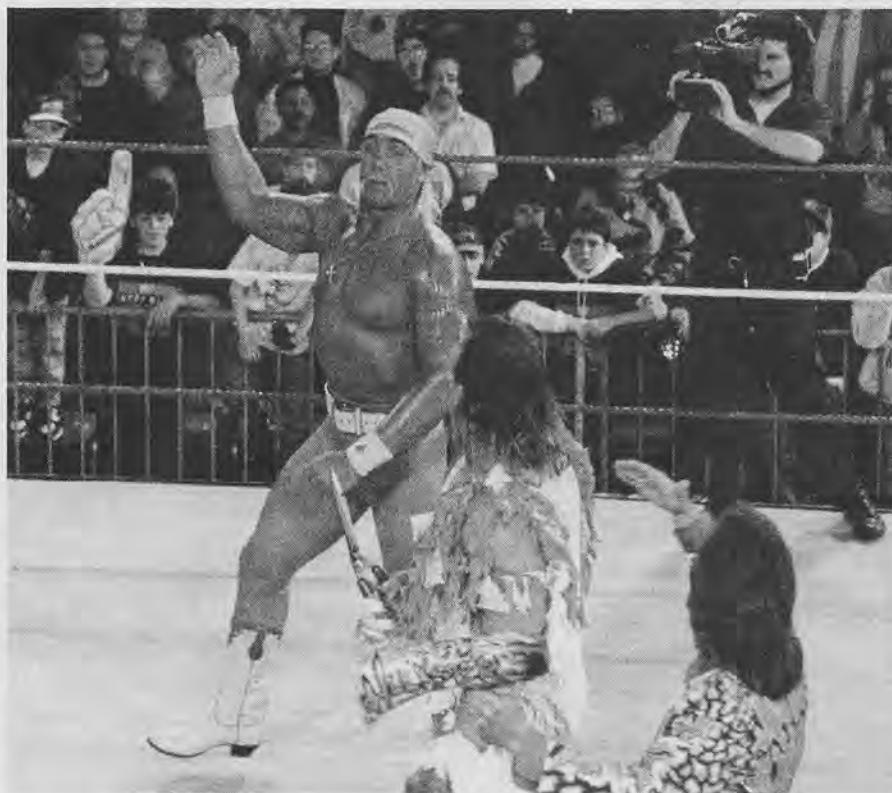
hard to find as an affordable medical plan. I realize it took a special kind of mental incapacity to elevate the Von Erichs to their dizzying pedestal in the first place.

I remember the deluge of hate mail after I wrote my first anti-Von Erich column. Very little of it made any sense, suffused as it was with the charming redneck philosophy of "if you don't understand someone, hit him."

"For what you wrote about the Von Erichs, if you're ever in Laredo I'll shoot your ears off," was a sample of the better-written stuff. I was astounded by the depth of their fans' simultaneous loyalty and stupidity. The Von Erichs clearly represented a modern-day golden calf, a false monument that glittered and sparkled but could not conceivably fulfill its worshippers' expectations.

The columns generating such wrath were, if I must say so, hardly damning. I have long advocated that, when healthy David and Kevin Von Erich were among the top 10 wrestlers of their day, with Kerry maybe 15 or 20 notches below. Mike, to any objective witness, was an glorified preliminary wrestler whose mediocre skills could never live up to the unfair burden of his name. My sin was to ascribe mortal qualities to these wrestling emissaries, a transgression of heavenly proportion.

A great many popular wrestlers have been trashed on this page, yet none of their fans, not the Hulkamaniacs or Expressophiles, ever defended their men with the zeal and hostility of Von Erich fans. It was nothing short of a Holy Crusade, which is fine. You pay your money, you do what you want, except the family came to believe in its own omnipotence. They looked out upon a sea of worshipping eyes and believed



The return of Hulk Hogan was inevitable, writes Ellner. Eddie expects the "Hulkster" to again become as popular as he was in the 1980s, the heyday of Hulkamania.

the hype. One problem: They were flesh and bone, just like you and me. They were human.

After Kerry's motorcycle crash, I wrote: "Enough is enough. Whoever is in charge of fate, please leave this family alone." I must have spoken to the wrong god.

Kerry Von Erich could not cope with public pressure. The devotion of his flock could not exorcise the demons that haunted him. His reach exceeded his grasp, and it ended up costing him his life.

NEWS ITEM: HOGAN LIVES!

The return of Hulk Hogan appears inevitable. Signs are everywhere. Turban sales are on the rise. Tanning salons report increased membership. The Hair Club For Men phones are ringing off their hooks. The WWF publicity machine was in full gear last month when it was announced on George Michael's nationally syndicated *Sports Machine* programs

that Hogan would see action soon in a tag team match.

Hogan claimed his motivation stems from the beating his good friend Brutus Beefcake received at the hands of Money Inc. It is true that Beefcake's reconstructed face was almost deconstructed by a metal briefcase, but Hogan's desire for action has little to do with his fallen friend.

For the last 12 months, Hogan's been acting in bad movies and playing with his small children; he is bored to death. Now that time has softened the stigma of his alleged steroid use, Hogan is ready to resurrect Hulkamania. The question: Do we care? Will fans, accustomed to the noble title reign of Bret Hart, reject the hyperbolic, overstimulated Hogan? Will they see Hogan for what he really was—an overmuscled, one-dimensional strongman? Will they boo him back into retirement?

I doubt it. □

ON ASSIGNMENT

(Continued from page 16)



Missy Hyatt's previous stint as a manager came in 1989, when she guided the careers of Scott and Rick Steiner. After three years as a commentator, Hyatt has returned to ringside.

On a much, much lighter note, Missy Hyatt has decided to return to ringside. She has signed The Barbarian, and intends to lead him quickly to a title. But first there is the little matter of "Mr. Wonderful" Paul Orndorff to contend with.

"I consider it a reclamation project," Missy said from her Atlanta office. "The Barbarian has been terribly mismanaged. It's like claiming a horse that ran a bad race. I got him for a great price, and now I'm going to make the rest of the wrestling world look foolish. Sending Orndorff into permanent retirement will be a good way to start."

Orndorff didn't appear ruffled. "I'm looking forward to retirement," he joked. "A man can't wrestle anymore, anyway. They suspended me in Smoky Mountain for using the pile-driver, and now my life is being threatened by a glorified manicurist. I feel like I'm wrestling in a sorority."

"I'm accustomed to abuse," Missy said. "People never take women seriously in this sport."

But then wrestling's prettiest commentator grew serious.

"People forget that I managed Rick and Scott Steiner and made them who they are today. I've reached a point in my career where people think I must make a choice between glamour and grit. People look at my body and assume my mind is on vacation. That's a prejudice women have fought against for too long. I am a beautiful woman, and I take great pride in my appearance. And if a great body obscures a great strategy, so much the better. While everyone's looking at me, Barbarian will use my strategies to conquer Orndorff and everyone else. There is no stopping me once I put my mind to something."

She is woman, hear her roar. Since the Steiners were unavailable for comment, I couldn't get their reaction to Missy's claim that she made them what they are. Certainly, if Missy claims things that aren't so, it puts her in good managerial company. Though I have criticized her in the past, I think everyone is entitled to the benefit of the doubt.

If Barbarian survives a very angry Paul Orndorff, the little "manicurist" must be doing something right. □

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INSIDE WRESTLING'S OFFICIAL RATINGS

TOP 15

- 1—**BIG VAN VADER**
(1) WCW World champion
- 2—**BRET HART**
(2) WWF World champion
- 3—**SHAWN MICHAELS**
(4) WWF I-C champion

- 4—**BARRY WINDHAM**
(13) NWA champion
- 5—**TATANKA**
(6) No. 1 contender: I-C title
- 6—**DUSTIN RHODES**
(3) WCW U.S. champion
- 7—**THE UNDERTAKER**
(-) No. 2 contender: WWF title

- 8—**YOKOZUNA**
(5) No. 3 contender: WWF title
- 9—**JERRY LAWLER**
(7) USWA champion
- 10—**JEFF JARRETT**
(-) USWA Southern champion
- 11—**TONY ANTHONY**
(5) Smoky Mountain champion

- 12—**CRUSH**
(-) No. 2 contender: WWF I-C
- 13—**STING**
(-) No. 3 contender: WCW title
- 14—**STEVIE RAY**
(11) Global N.A. champion
- 15—**BRIAN CHRISTOPHER**
(8) USWA Texas champion

WCW

- 1—**BIG VAN VADER**
(1) 445, Denver, CO
- 2—**DUSTIN RHODES**
(2) 254, Austin, TX
- 3—**BARRY WINDHAM**
(4) 263, Sweetwater, TX

- 4—**STING**
(5) 260, Venice Beach, CA
- 5—**PAUL ORNDORFF**
(6) 253, Brandon, FL
- 6—**2 COLD SCORPIO**
(9) 239, Denver, CO
- 7—**CACTUS JACK**
(10) 304, Truth or Cons., NM

- 8—**CHRIS BENOIT**
(8) 218, Edmonton, Alberta
- 9—**DAVEY BOY SMITH**
(-) 250, Leeds, England
- 10—**MAXX PAYNE**
(14) 350, Iowa City, IA
- 11—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
(12) 238, Honolulu, HI

- 12—**BRIAN PILLMAN**
(13) 229, Cincinnati, OH
- 13—**STEVE AUSTIN**
(15) 241, Dallas, TX
- 14—**ERIK WATTS**
(7) 262, Oklahoma City, OK
- 15—**STEVE REGAL**
(-) 260, Blackpool, England

WWF

- 1—**BRET HART**
(1) 235, Calgary, Alberta
- 2—**SHAWN MICHAELS**
(2) 220, San Antonio, TX
- 3—**TATANKA**
(4) 260, Miami, FL

- 4—**THE UNDERTAKER**
(10) 320, Dallas, TX
- 5—**CRUSH**
(-) 300, Honolulu, Hawaii
- 6—**YOKOZUNA**
(3) 505, Samoa
- 7—**BAM BAM BIGELOW**
(5) 368, Mt. Laurel, NJ

- 8—**KAMALA**
(14) 360, Uganda
- 9—**BOB BACKLUND**
(6) 242, Princeton, MN
- 10—**RANDY SAVAGE**
(7) 245, Sarasota, FL
- 11—**FATU**
(-) 260, Samoa

- 12—**DOINK**
(13) 236, parts unknown
- 13—**JERRY LAWLER**
(-) 234, Memphis, TN
- 14—**LEX LUGER**
(-) 268, Chicago, IL
- 15—**VIRGIL**
(-) 233, Pittsburgh, PA

MOST POPULAR

- 1—**THE UNDERTAKER**
Last month: No. 3 Most Popular
- 2—**STING**
Last month: No. 1 Most Popular
- 3—**BRET HART**
Last month: No. 2 Most Popular

- 4—**CRUSH**
Last month: No. 4 Most Popular
- 5—**DUSTIN RHODES**
Last month: No. 5 Most Popular
- 6—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
Last month: No. 8 Most Popular
- 7—**TATANKA**
Last month: No. 11 Most Popular

- 8—**CACTUS JACK**
Last month: No. 13 Most Popular
- 9—**DAVEY BOY SMITH**
Last month: No. 14 Most Popular
- 10—**RANDY SAVAGE**
Last month: No. 9 Most Popular
- 11—**2 COLD SCORPIO**
Last month: No. 10 Most Popular

- 12—**JEFF JARRETT**
Last month: No. 15 Most Popular
- 13—**HULK HOGAN**
Last month: unrated
- 14—**ROBBY V**
Last month: unrated
- 15—**BRUTUS BEEFCAKE**
Last month: unrated

MOST HATED

- 1—**DOINK**
Last month: No. 1 Most Hated
- 2—**BARRY WINDHAM**
Last month: No. 2 Most Hated
- 3—**YOKOZUNA**
Last month: No. 3 Most Hated

- 4—**BIG VAN VADER**
Last month: No. 5 Most Hated
- 5—**SHAWN MICHAELS**
Last month: No. 6 Most Hated
- 6—**GIANT GONZALES**
Last month: unrated
- 7—**BRIAN CHRISTOPHER**
Last month: No. 7 Most Hated

- 8—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**
Last month: No. 8 Most Hated
- 9—**ARN ANDERSON**
Last month: No. 9 Most Hated
- 10—**RIC FLAIR**
Last month: No. 10 Most Hated
- 11—**TONY ANTHONY**
Last month: No. 11 Most Hated

- 12—**PAUL ORNDORFF**
Last month: No. 15 Most Hated
- 13—**ROD PRICE**
Last month: No. 12 Most Hated
- 14—**BRIAN PILLMAN**
Last month: No. 13 Most Hated
- 15—**MAXX PAYNE**
Last month: unrated

TAG TEAMS

- 1—**RICK STEAMBOAT & SHANE DOUGLAS**
(1) WCW World tag team champions
- 2—**STEVE AUSTIN & BRIAN PILLMAN**
(2) No. 1 contenders: WCW tag title
- 3—**IRWIN R. SCHYSTER & TED DIBIASE**
(3) WWF World tag team champions
- 4—**RICK & SCOTT STEINER**
(4) No. 1 contenders: WWF tag title
- 5—**THE HEADSHRINKERS**
(6) No. 2 contenders: WWF tag title

- 6—**THE MOONDGS**
(8) USWA tag team champions
- 7—**THE HEAVENLY BODIES**
(7) Smoky Mountain tag team champions
- 8—**THE KONGS**
(-) Global tag team champions
- 9—**RON & DON HARRIS**
(14) No. 1 contenders: USWA tag title
- 10—**THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**
(13) No. 1 contenders: SMW tag title

- 11—**THE NASTY BOYS**
(11) No. 3 contenders: WWF tag title
- 12—**THE BEVERLY BROTHERS**
(12) No. 4 contenders: WWF tag title
- 13—**THE SUPER DESTROYERS**
(15) ECW/WWA tag team champions
- 14—**STEVE REGAL & ERIK WATTS**
(-) No. 3 contenders: WCW tag title
- 15—**JOHN HAWK & BOBBY DUNCUM JR.**
(-) No. 1 contenders: Global tag title

These ratings are compiled by the editors with the assistance of promoters, wrestlers, and reporters around the country, and are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue. "Most Popular" and "Most Hated" ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and on mail that comes to our offices. Championships marked with asterisks on the "Roll Call of Champions" indicate title changes that have taken place since our previous issue. The information under the championship listing indicates the date that champion won the title, who the former champion was, and where the match took place.

For period ended March 1, 1993

ROLL CALL OF CHAMPIONS

ALL-JAPAN ASIAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: KENTA KOBASHI & TSUYOSHI AIKUCHI

(May 25, 1992; from Dan Kroffat & Doug Furnas; Miyagi, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: MITSUHARA MISAWA

(August 22, 1992; from Stan Hansen; Tokyo, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN JR. HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: MASANOBU FUCHI

(October 20, 1989; from Joe Malenko; Nagoya, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: STEVE WILLIAMS & TERRY GORDY

(January 30, 1993; from Mitsuhsara Misawa & Toshiaki Kiwada; Chiba, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN UNITED NATIONAL CHAMPION: MITSUHARA MISAWA

(August 22, 1992; from Stan Hansen; Tokyo, Japan)

* **ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S CHAMPION: DEBBIE MALENKO**

(February 10, 1993; from Kuro Ito; Kumamoto, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: AJA KONG

(November 26, 1992; from Bull Nakano; Kawasaki, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S PACIFIC CHAMPION: AKIRA HOKUTO

(November 26, 1992; from Kyoko Inoue; Kawasaki, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: MANAMI TOYOTA & TOSHYO YAMADA

(March 20, 1992; from Aja Kong & Bison Kimura; Tokyo, Japan)

CATCH WRESTLING ASSOCIATION CHAMPION: HAWK

(December 20, 1992; from Rambo; Bremen, Germany)

CATCH WRESTLING ASSOCIATION EUROPEAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

MAD BULL BUSTER & LARRY CAMERON

(July 11, 1992; for vacant title over Miles Zino & Steve Regal; Graz, Austria)

CATCH WRESTLING ASSOCIATION INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPION: TATSUJI FUJINAMI

(July 11, 1992; over Bob Orton Jr. for vacant title; Graz, Austria)

CATCH WRESTLING ASSOCIATION MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT

(To be determined in upcoming tournament)

ECW CHAMPION: THE SANDMAN

(November 16, 1992; from Don Muraco; Philadelphia, PA)

ECW TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: SUPER DESTROYERS

(June 23, 1992; tournament final over Night Breed; Philadelphia, PA)

GLWA CHAMPION: IVAN KOLOFF

(July 11, 1992; from Psycho Mike; Willowick, OH)

* **GWF LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: CALVIN KNAPP**

(February 26, 1993; from Alex Porteau; Dallas, TX)

* **GWF NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPION: STEVIE RAY**

(February 5, 1993; from Rod Price; Dallas, TX)

* **GWF TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE EBONY EXPERIENCE**

(February 26, 1993; from The Bad Breed; Dallas, TX)

IWA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: VLADIMIR KOLOFF

(October 17, 1992; battle royal final over Thunderfoot II; Girard, OH)

IWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: TITLE HELD UP

(Most recently held by The Thunderfoot)

IWA U.S. CHAMPION: PRESTON STEELE

(July 14, 1991; from Jules Strongbow; Sydney, Australia)

IWA WOMEN'S CHAMPION: BAMBI

(March 25, 1990; from Peggy Lee Leather; Palmetto, FL)

IWCW LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: JOE SAVIDOLI

(December 26, 1991; from The Tasmaniac; Monticello, NY)

IWCW TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE SIOUX WAR PARTY

(May 9, 1992; tournament final over The Canadians; Hamburg, PA)

IWF CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT

(To be determined in upcoming tournament)

IWF TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE LONGRIDERS

(February 8, 1992; from The Heartbreakers; Orlando, FL)

IWGP CHAMPION: THE GREAT MUTA

(August 16, 1992; from Riki Choshu; Fukuoka, Japan)

IWGP INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: KENSUKE SASAKI & HAWK

(December 14, 1992; from Scott Norton & Tony Halme; Osaka, Japan)

IWGP JR. HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: JUSHIN LIGER

(January 4, 1993; from Ultimo Dragon; Tokyo, Japan)

NEW ZEALAND CHAMPION: BRUNO BEKKAR

(December 12, 1987; from Johnny Garcia; Auckland, New Zealand)

* **NWA CHAMPION: BARRY WINDHAM**

(February 21, 1993; from The Great Muta; Asheville, NC)

NWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: RICK STEAMBOAT & SHANE DOUGLAS

(November 18, 1992; from Barry Windham & Dustin Rhodes; Macon, GA)

PWA CHAMPION: THE HATER

(October 20, 1992; from Charlie Norris; Minneapolis, MN)

PWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: LIGHTNING KID & JERRY LYNN

(September 28, 1992; for held-up title over Tony DeNucci & Tommy Ferrara; Fridley, MN)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION CHAMPION: MITSUHARA MISAWA

(August 22, 1992; from Stan Hansen; Tokyo, Japan)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

STEVE WILLIAMS & TERRY GORDY

(January 30, 1993; from Mitsuhsara Misawa & Toshiaki Kiwada; Chiba, Japan)

PWF HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: ITALIAN STALLION

(July 7, 1990; from Russian Assassin; War, WV)

PWF JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: GEORGE SOUTH

(June 15, 1991; tournament final; Charlotte, NC)

PWF TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE CRUEL CONNECTION

(January 29, 1993; from Star Ryde & Flaming Youth; Taylorsville, NC)

SMOKY MOUNTAIN HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: TONY ANTHONY

(August 8, 1992; from Brian Lee; Johnson City, TN)

SMOKY MOUNTAIN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE HEAVENLY BODIES

(January 18, 1993; from The Rock 'n' Roll Express; Newton, NC)

SUPER WORLD SPORTS TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: YOSHIAKI YATSU & HAKU

(April 18, 1992; from Earthquake & Typhoon; Tokyo, Japan)

USWA CHAMPION: JERRY LAWLER

(December 14, 1992; from Todd Champion; Memphis, TN)

* **USWA SOUTHERN CHAMPION: JEFF JARRETT**

(March 1, 1993; from Brian Christopher; Memphis, TN)

* **USWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE MOONDOGS**

(February 22, 1993; from Ron & Don Harris; Memphis, TN)

UWA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: EL CANEK

(July 5, 1992; from Dos Caras; Naucalpan, Mexico)

UWF INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: NOBUHIKO TAKADA

(September 21, 1992; from Gary Albright; Osaka, Japan)

WCW U.S. CHAMPION: DUSTIN RHODES

(January 11, 1993; tournament final over Rick Steamboat; Atlanta, GA)

WCW WORLD CHAMPION: BIG VAN VADER

(December 30, 1992; from Ron Simmons; Baltimore, MD)

WCW WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: RICK STEAMBOAT & SHANE DOUGLAS

(November 19, 1992; from Barry Windham & Dustin Rhodes; Macon, GA)

WWA FRONTIER MARTIAL ARTS CHAMPION: MR. ONITA

(September 19, 1992; from Tiger Jeet Singh; Yokohama, Japan)

WWA FRONTIER MARTIAL ARTS TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: TARZAN GOTO & GREGORY VERITCHEV

(May 24, 1992; from Horace Boulder & Sabu; Tokyo, Japan)

WWC CARIBBEAN CHAMPION: YUKIHIRO KANEMURA

(December 18, 1992; from Miguel Perez Jr.; Fukushima, Japan)

* **WWC TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: RICKY SANTANA & RAY GONZALEZ**

(February 21, 1993; from Mohammad Hussein & El Vigilante; Bayamon, Puerto Rico)

WWC TV CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT

(Most recently held by Dick Murdoch)

WWC UNIVERSAL CHAMPION: CARLOS COLON

(November 28, 1992; from Dick Murdoch; Manati, Puerto Rico)

WWC WOMEN'S CHAMPION: SASHA

(November 21, 1992; over La Tigresa for vacant title; Caguas, Puerto Rico)

WWF INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPION: SHAWN MICHAELS

(October 27, 1992; from Davey Boy Smith; Terre Haute, IN)

WWF WORLD CHAMPION: BRET HART

(October 12, 1992; from Ric Flair; Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

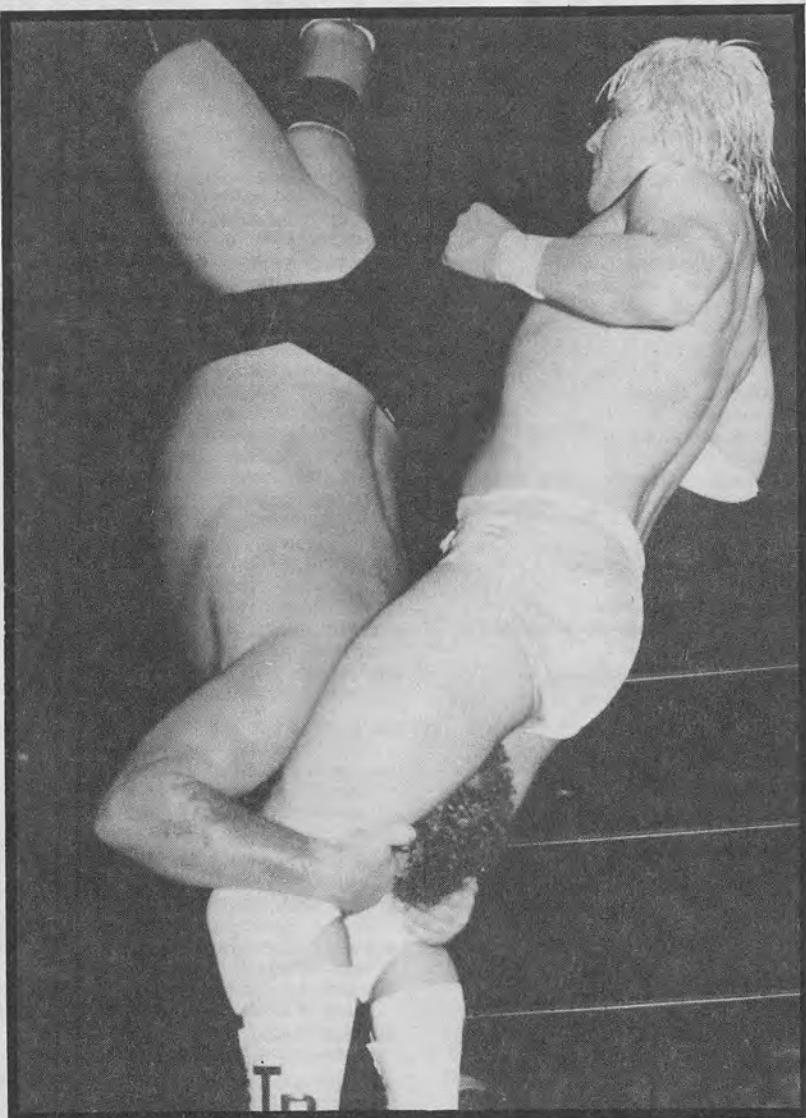
WWF WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: MONEY INC.

(October 13, 1992; from The Natural Disasters; Regina, Saskatchewan)

Blast From The Past

This Month In Wrestling History

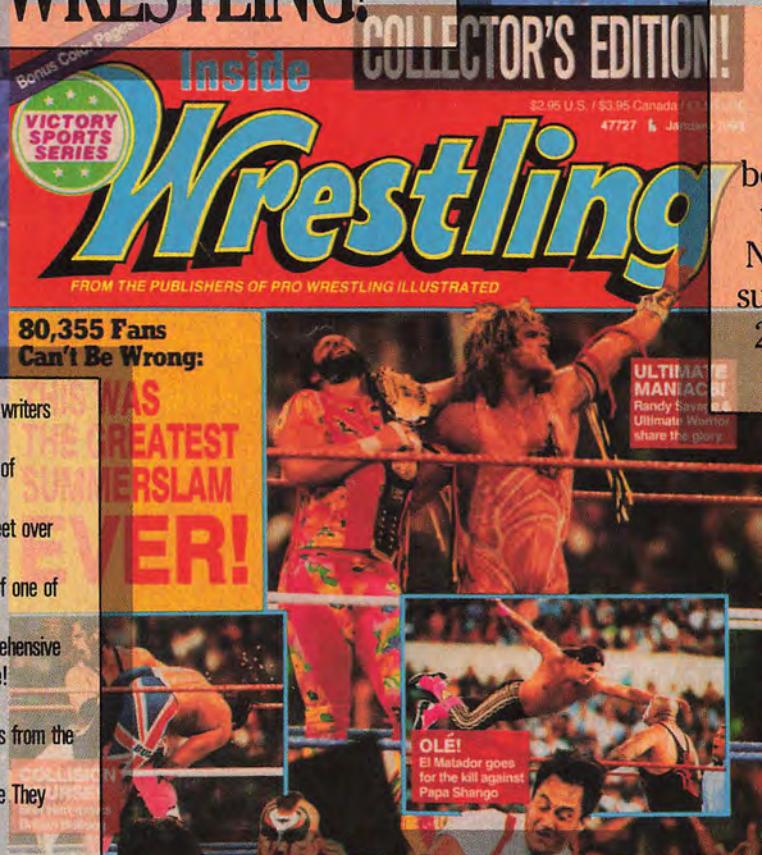
“RACE BURNED BY ‘WILDFIRE’ ”



TOMMY RICH vs. HARLEY RACE
APRIL 27, 1981

Driven by determination and the enthusiastic support of the fans in Augusta, Georgia, “Wildfire” Tommy Rich scored one of the greatest upsets in the history of the sport when he beat Harley Race for the NWA World title at the age of 24. Rich used a perfectly executed piledriver (pictured) to stun Race and followed with a vertical bodypress (made famous by Lou Thesz) to score for the most glorious victory of his career. Unfortunately for “Wildfire,” the wily Race took the title back just five days later in Gainesville, Georgia.

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